

JOURNAL

FALL 2019

RELATE•ABLE

CANYONS

LET'S SAY GRACE

“So now I am giving you a new commandment:
Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should
love one another. Your love for one another will
prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

Jesus, in John 13:34–35

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Printed by Ironwood, an RRD Company, Tempe, AZ.

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INTRODUCTION

JOURNAL

A journal is a simple tool intended to bring about a regular rhythm, or habit, in our lives. The purpose isn't simply to complete the journal, but rather to allow the journal to open a conduit between us and God. And that conduit could become an opportunity for the Spirit to transform our hearts, minds, and souls.

DISCIPLESHIP

Discipleship is an apprenticeship of sorts. In the Christian faith, for the past 2,000 years, disciples have been those who have looked to Jesus as the Lord of their lives. Disciples have wanted to speak like Jesus, hear like Jesus, see like Jesus, and act like Jesus. This journal is an attempt to help us become more aware of and respond to the Spirit of Jesus leading our lives. The goal is to become more committed disciples of Jesus who are, in turn, making new disciples along the way.

COMMUNITY

The best way to journey with Jesus is within a community. While you may engage this journal alone in the mornings or evenings, don't stop there. Gather regularly with a community for corporate worship. And gather regularly with a small group of others who are on this journey with you. Even if you don't have an official small group, invite one or two others to dialogue with you about this journal. Your perspective and understanding will grow as you have open, honest conversations within the context of a group.

JESUS

At the center of it all is Jesus. If we miss Jesus in the rhythms and activities of our lives, we miss everything.

We're excited to be on this journey with you, and trust that God's Spirit will work in us and through us as we continue to follow Jesus.

Grace + Peace + Love

LECTIO DIVINA

Lectio divina, or “sacred reading,” is a spiritual discipline of engaging with Scripture. Its intent is not to help us read more Scripture, nor to learn everything there is to know about Scripture. Instead, lectio divina encourages us to open ourselves to God’s presence and listen deeply to the Word of God. A fundamental premise of this practice is that God’s Word is alive and can communicate loving truth to those who listen carefully.

This practice has roots in the early centuries of Christianity, was then developed in monastic communities of the Middle Ages, and has seen a resurgence of interest in the past fifty years or so.

Lectio divina can be practiced with any passage of Scripture. It is a great practice for the daily readings in this journal. The process of lectio divina works like this:

First, quiet yourself, free yourself from all distractions, and recognize that you are in the loving presence of God. Open yourself to the possibilities of what God may communicate during this time.

Now engage in the four steps of lectio divina:

1. **Read.** Read your chosen passage of Scripture out loud. Read it slowly, savoring each word, allowing the words to move from your head down into your heart. If a particular word or phrase catches your attention, allow yourself to dwell on that word or phrase. Receive it as a word of God for you.
2. **Meditate.** Read the passage again and enter into it with your imagination. Watch the characters; listen to their interactions. Pay attention to details that might be easy to overlook. What would it be like if you were in that situation, or if you heard those words spoken for the very first time?
3. **Pray.** Read the passage once more. As you read, listen attentively for how God is addressing you and inviting you to respond. Let the Scripture guide you into a time of prayer, in which you respond openly and freely to God’s gracious invitation to you.
4. **Contemplate.** Read the passage one final time. This time, simply rest in God’s presence and love. Allow yourself to be still, to pause, to wait, with no other agenda. Stay with God as long as you like. Then as you begin to move back toward everyday life, take this entire experience in God’s Word with you. Remember and reflect on this process frequently throughout your day.

RELATE•ABLE

RELATE•ABLE

"How can you draw close to God when you are far from your own self?"

- Augustine, Confessions (AD 500)

RELATE•ABLE

WEEK ONE

SERMON NOTES | INSIGHTS | THOUGHTS | SCRIBBLES

GROUP QUESTIONS

Can you name a conversation you had with someone who had a different view than you that got awkward?

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What was your biggest takeaway from this week's sermon?

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Have you ever felt like you were talking to someone who was not really listening to you? How did that make you feel?

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Whoever's birthday is closest to today, Read James 1:19-20. As a group determine the top 5 places in society that need to hear this verse? Explain your answer.

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How do you feel like James 1:19-20 is speaking to you?

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How many of your close friends have opinions that are very different than your own?

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How can we hold strong positions/beliefs but offer grace in our posture/attitude when listening to someone who believes differently than we do?

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Let your conversation be gracious and attractive so that you will have the right response for everyone.

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COLOSSIANS 4:6

This week, where are you going to try and practice the art of listening and attempt to understand someone's position? Do you give permission for your group to ask how it went next week?

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WEEK ONE | DAILY READINGS

Lectio Divina is a classic spiritual discipline of engaging Scripture. **READ** the passage—slowly. **MEDITATE** on the passage as you read it again. Put yourself in the passage/story. **PRAY** as you read the passage once more, listen to and talk with God about the passage. And then, **CONTEMPLATE** what the Spirit is moving in you. Circle or underline a word or phrase that jumps out at you. Take the passage with you throughout your day. (for more on this discipline, see page V)

MONDAY

My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and humbly accept the word planted in you, which can save you.

JAMES 1:19-21

What emotions emerge when faced with something that is in conflict with your predetermined notions? James seems to suggest that in the pursuit of righteousness our “human anger” should fade away and we should draw upon the word that is “planted” in us. What are some intentional ways, outside of weekend church services, that you can cause God’s word to take root in your heart and life?

TUESDAY

The way of fools seems right to them, but the wise listen to advice.

PROVERBS 12:15

Have you ever found yourself listening to someone speak yet only thinking about what you will say when they are done? We all are probably guilty of this from time to time, but imagine yourself listening to someone, with your only agenda being to understand them? What would it look like to listen like a “wise” person? Today ask yourself, “Where is God at work in my conversations?”

WEDNESDAY

Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

COLOSSIANS 4:5-6

Having a strong belief in something does not mean your posture has to be brash or harsh. The way of Jesus is to be 100% Grace & 100% Truth. Pray and seek where Jesus is inviting you to move your life more into this. Do you require more grace in your relationships or more truth?

READ MEDITATE PRAY CONTEMPLATE

THURSDAY

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-5

Loving people who are lovely is easy, everyone can do that! It's loving those who are difficult, stubborn, arrogant, etc. Those are the people who are difficult to love, right? Woah, sheesh, can recall moments where you fit in all of these categories? Often times many of them at the same time! How great is our God that He loves us in each moment of our life. Be honest and humble with yourself. You may find that in recognizing your own difficult moments it enables you to love those who are difficult to love as well.

FRIDAY

Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions

PROVERBS 18:2

People want, almost more than anything, to be heard, understood, valued and loved. Often times it takes that specific order to fully love someone. Imagine trying to fully love someone with hearing them or understanding them. It would be immensely difficult! This weekend Jesus is inviting you to listen to someone, to understand them, and to value them. Who knows, you just might love them for it. Try it out!

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER

Father, help me to embrace the way You have created me. Thank You for all of my gifts and passions and quirks. May I submit the parts of my life that need to continue to grow and mature to You. And may I be open to ways You want to continue to form and shape me in Christ.

Amen.

RELATE•ABLE

WEEK TWO

SERMON NOTES | INSIGHTS | THOUGHTS | SCRIBBLES

WEEK TWO | DAILY READINGS

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MONDAY

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called “Today,” so that none of you may be hardened by sin’s deceitfulness.

HEBREWS 3:13

Some people seem to have spiritual gift of encouragement. Can you think of someone who is especially gifted in encouraging others? Although some are more naturally gifted, we are all called to be encouraging! What are 5 practical ways you can practice encouraging this week and hone this spiritual skill?

TUESDAY

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

EPHESIANS 4:29

Sometimes the person we need to encourage most is ourselves. Being discouraging to ourselves often comes when we agree with the lies that the enemy wants us to believe about ourselves. Recognizing those things as lies and asking God to encourage you with HIS truth can be life giving. Spend some time with God claiming his promises as truths in your life. Not sure what those promises are, feel free to google search “Encouraging Bible Verses”.

WEDNESDAY

But Moses told the people, “Don’t be afraid. Just stand still and watch the Lord rescue you today. The Egyptians you see today will never be seen again. The Lord himself will fight for you. Just stay calm.”

EXODUS 14:13-14

Take some time today, 5-10 minutes to be still with Jesus. Allow Him the opportunity to fight for you, to breathe life into you, to be gracious and good to you. What do you hear God saying to you in your silence?

READ MEDITATE PRAY CONTEMPLATE

THURSDAY

The Lord bless you and protect you. May the Lord smile on you and be gracious to you. May the Lord show you his favor and give you his peace.

NUMBERS 6:24-26 NLT

If God wants to bless you like this, what's keeping you from blessing others in the same way? Remember, every single person is created in the image of God! We don't bless others in order to receive a blessing for ourselves. Remember Karma is not a real thing. We bless others because our Heavenly Father has so richly blessed us.

FRIDAY

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3

Loving people is a necessary ingredient for blessing people. Spend some time asking God to help you love others as Christ loves you.

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER

Jesus, I desire a deeper relationship with You. I want to be with You and become like You. Help me to set aside some intentional moments this week when I can encounter Your presence and be formed by the Spirit. Forgive me for the times I allow Your voice to be drowned out by the things around me.

Amen.

RELATE•ABLE

WEEK THREE

SERMON NOTES | INSIGHTS | THOUGHTS | SCRIBBLES

GROUP QUESTIONS

Have you ever “put yourself out there” and failed in a humorous way? Maybe an embarrassing moment?

Think back to the message from Sunday. What was a takeaway moment, phrase, or thought that you feel like you could share with someone?

The person who owns the most pets read 2 Corinthians 3:13-18, this verse talks about a “veil” that we all wear. Why do we wear a veil that covers our true self?

Do you find yourself often hiding your struggles, or being open and honest about them? How do you most often answer the question, “hey, how ya doin?”

How do you think God could use your story to make a Kingdom Impact? When you consider it, do you focus on the high points or the hard times?

Why is it necessary for those who follow Jesus to be relatable?

Being authentic doesn’t mean you share 100% of you to everyone all of the time. How do you personally gauge when to open up and share vulnerably?

Sunday we said, “People admire your strengths but they RELATE to your weakness.” What’s your next step? How can you be appropriately more authentic and allow people to relate to you?

Brene Brown, who has become our modern day “evangelist” for authenticity and vulnerability states, “Authenticity is the daily practice of letting go of who we think we’re supposed to be and embracing who we are.”

This week make an effort to allow your weakness to become God’s strength. Be more, “who you are” and less “who you are supposed to be.” Come back next week and let us know how it went! Do you give your group permission to ask you about your story next week?

A grid of 10 columns and 10 rows of small dots, intended for writing group prayer requests.

WEEK THREE | DAILY READINGS

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MONDAY

For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness with great fear and trembling.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:2-3

The Apostle Paul delivers a level of authenticity that many of us are uncomfortable with. Being open and honest about his fear and even his trembling. God is so real that he meets you right where you are and wants you to be real with him. How does this make you feel?

TUESDAY

The Lord is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life of whom shall I be afraid?

PSALMS 27:1

Consider God being the source of all strengths. Being 100% sufficient in meeting all of your needs. How does this make being relatable and authentic more attainable?

WEDNESDAY

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

1 PETER 5:7

Spend 5 minutes in silence before the Lord. Contemplate 1 Peter 5:7 and give your cares to the Father who loves you deeply.

READ MEDITATE PRAY CONTEMPLATE

THURSDAY

Yet you know me, Lord; you see me and test my thoughts about you.

JEREMIAH 12:3

Is there a greater love story than Jesus' love for you? Brian Rosner calls being known by God the "Cinderella of Theology." We bring nothing to the table with God. We have no titles or wealth that would attract Him to us. We have no earthly reason He should look at us, but He does! Knowing your worth comes from Christ, how does that help you be honest about your struggles?

FRIDAY

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

ROMANS 12:2

Being relatable doesn't mean you look like everyone or sound like everyone, but it does mean you are authentic with people. It's hard to know who you are before you realize who God made you to be. Remember, the more you walk with Jesus the more you discover who He created you to be. Do you think the good news in Romans 12 is for you?

THIS WEEK'S PRAYER

God, please give me a better awareness of the ways in which You have wired me and those around me. Give me a patient and understanding heart, especially with those who seem different. In everything, I want to show the kind of grace, love, and presence You have shown me.

In Jesus' name - Amen.

RELATE•ABLE

WEEK FOUR

SERMON NOTES | INSIGHTS | THOUGHTS | SCRIBBLES

WEEK FOUR | DAILY READINGS

Lectio Divina is a classic spiritual discipline of engaging Scripture. **READ** the passage—slowly. **MEDITATE** on the passage as you read it again. Put yourself in the passage/story. **PRAY** as you read the passage once more, listen to and talk with God about the passage. And then, **CONTEMPLATE** what the Spirit is moving in you. Circle or underline a word or phrase that jumps out at you. Take the passage with you throughout your day. (for more on this discipline, see page V)

MONDAY

Yet the Lord longs to be gracious to you; therefore he will rise up to show you compassion. For the Lord is a God of justice. Blessed are all who wait for him!

ISAIAH 30:18

Compassion and justice don't sound like they correlate, do they? Justice is often thought of as harsh or associated with some negativity while compassion is most always positive. In what ways is God Just and Compassionate? How might we learn from God being full of compassionate and just?

TUESDAY

Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

PHILIPPIANS 2:1-5

What's your biggest takeaway from this scripture? What's the good news this scripture is proclaiming?

WEDNESDAY

Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. Praise the Lord, my soul, and forget not all his benefits—who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

PSALMS 103:1-5

Take some time today and take an inventory of all the ways God has been compassionate to you. Thank God for the good things He has done and become aware of the good He is doing now. God is always present and at work!

READ MEDITATE PRAY CONTEMPLATE

THURSDAY

One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the time of prayer—at three in the afternoon. Now a man who was lame from birth was being carried to the temple gate called Beautiful, where he was put every day to beg from those going into the temple courts. When he saw Peter and John about to enter, he asked them for money. Peter looked straight at him, as did John. Then Peter said, “Look at us!” So the man gave them his attention, expecting to get something from them.

Then Peter said, “Silver or gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.” Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly the man’s feet and ankles became strong. He jumped to his feet and began to walk. Then he went with them into the temple courts, walking and jumping, and praising God. When all the people saw him walking and praising God, they recognized him as the same man who used to sit begging at the temple gate called Beautiful, and they were filled with wonder and amazement at what had happened to him.

ACTS 3:1-10

What does this verse teach us about compassion? How does what the lame man wants, and what he receives, differ? What’s the good news this proclaims about God’s compassion toward us?

FRIDAY

I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

JOHN 14:18

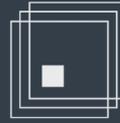
As your week comes to a close spend time thanking God for His presence and His promise to always be with you. His presence is compassion and love.

THIS WEEK’S PRAYER

Lord, I pray that my love will overflow more and more, and that I will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding... May I always be filled with the fruit of salvation—the righteous character produced in my life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to You.

Amen.

Paul’s Prayer–Phillipians 1:9,11



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