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*Living
The Life*

**CREATIVELY
CONNECTING
WITH GOD**

INTRODUCTION

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Living the Life

OVERVIEW

Welcome to an adventure where you will have the opportunity to enjoy sweet time with Jesus creatively meditating on His Word with Him.

Each week you will camp out in one verse from the first pack in the Navigator's Topical Memory System which is based on the Wheel Illustration. After you memorize the verse, you will have opportunity to do a "bite" of Bible study and then chew on it while learning different ways of interacting with Scripture. Each week has a different focus:

Week 1 Introduction: Coloring Pages	Key Verses:
Week 2 Christ the Center: Contemplative Doodling	2 Corinthians 5:17
Week 3 Obedience to Christ: Prayerful Patterns.	Romans 12:1
Week 4 The Word: Borders & Motif Meditation.	2 Timothy 3:16-17
Week 5 Prayer: Banners, Scrolls, Flags & Frames.	John 15:7
Week 6 Fellowship: Word Art.	Matthew 18:20
Week 7 Witnessing: Sketching.	Mark 4:19
Week 8 Creatively Meditating for Life!	Psalms 119:14-16

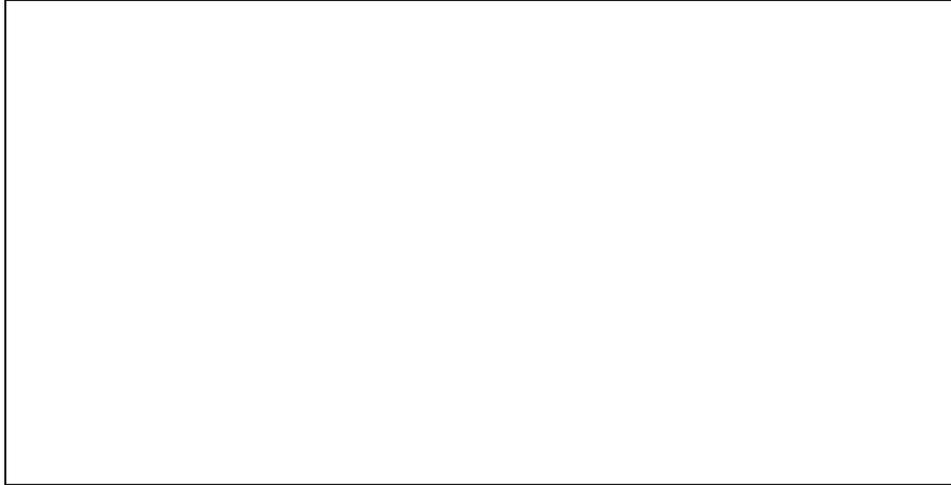
I encourage you to ask the Lord to help you be consistent to spend a half hour a day meditating on His Word. The next eight weeks provide an opportunity to discover and establish a rhythm that works for you during this season.

I also encourage you to press on if something is out of your comfort zone. And be intentional to remember what you did when you experienced sweet times with the Lord. If you do, you will end the eight weeks with a rich toolbox for facilitating even more transformational connections with Jesus.

Above all, invite Jesus to guide your time and keep drawing you closer to Himself as you creatively meditate. And as you do, may He fill you with much joy in His presence!

INTRODUCTION

When you think about life what comes to mind? Draw a picture to illustrate this:



Meriam Webster defines life as “the quality that distinguishes a vital and functional being from a dead body.”

The Oxford Dictionary defines life as “the condition that distinguishes animals and plants from inorganic matter, including the capacity for growth, reproduction, functional activity, and continual change preceding death.”

Now consider Jesus’ words, “I have come that they might have life and have it to the full?” (John 10:10) What picture comes to mind as you consider this?



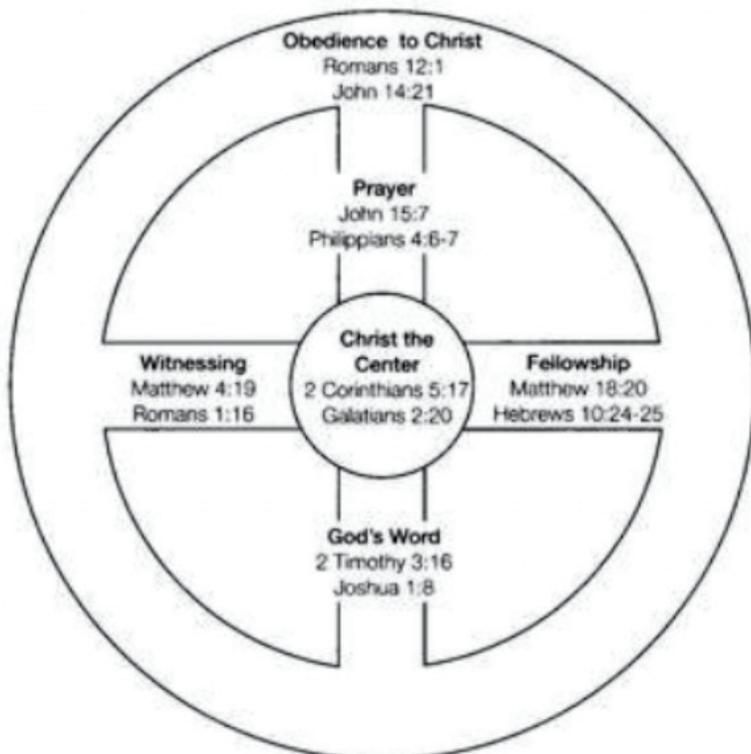
How does this relate to the two definitions above?

Years ago when Dawson Trotman spoke at West Point. He asked, "Does anyone here not want to sin? if so, meet me afterwards and I'll tell you the secret. He then shared Psalm 119:9, 11 with the students, "How can a young man keep his way pure, by living according to your word...I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

Sixty years later one of the students shared, "I was one of those guys and I started memorizing all kinds of Scripture. But I was still sinning. I couldn't figure out what was going on!

Then one day, God showed me all the verses were "stuck" in my head. When they made it down to my heart, that's when my life began to change forever!"

Here is an opportunity to learn how to hide God's Word in your heart so you can experience more of the abundance of life Jesus paid so dearly to make available to you. Throughout the next eight weeks you will have opportunity to learn not only how to memorize Scripture but also understand it and creatively meditate on it in a way that helps it sink down deep into your heart so you can live it out for life!



After this first week's introduction you will be focusing on one verse each week, investing a half hour a day understanding, memorizing and meditating on it. These verses come from The first pack in The Navigators' Topical Memory System and are all related to the wheel illustration.

The Origin of the Wheel Illustration

Over seventy years ago the founder of the Navigators, Dawson Trotman, was teaching a boys' Sunday school class at a church in Lomita, California.

"He had heard an illustration that likened the Christian life to a stool with three legs - the Bible, Prayer and Witnessing. If any one of the three legs was missing, the stool couldn't stand up by itself.

Dawson described the illustration's transition from a stool to a wheel: "As I thought about the stool, I didn't like the illustration, because the Christian life shouldn't be lived sitting down! A stool is great if you are milking a cow, repairing a shoe, or peeling potatoes. Christians aren't sitting - especially little boys.

I began to think of a three-spoked wheel because a wheel is something a boy or a grown man can identify with. Automobiles, bicycles, ships, and trains all use wheels.

The hub had to be Christ. The rim had to be the well-rounded Christian living his life in the power of the Holy Spirit. But what about the spokes? I found my boys could learn their Bible verses, they could pray, and they could witness to their buddies, but something was wrong. There was something missing. We needed a fourth spoke, which we called Living the Life." Then the fourth spoke was changed to obedience.

Later, the fourth spoke was changed to Fellowship, a key concept found throughout the New Testament and obedience to Christ was moved to the rim of the wheel.

"Now the wheel made sense. It was balanced with two vertical spokes and two horizontal spokes. These were the four basics of the Christian life with the Lord Jesus Christ right in the middle. If any one of the four is missing or is out of proportion, the entire wheel gets off balance, and you have a lop-sided Christian who is going thump, thump, thump down through life."

The Heart of the Wheel Illustration



When you look at the wheel illustration what stands out to you? Why?

When one of my friends asked Jerry Bridges if he would change anything about the wheel Illustration, he replied, "I'd make the hub bigger." People tend to focus on the spokes as if that's what they need to do to be a good Christian and end up missing the whole point is to live aware of and responsive to Christ being the Center of your life.

When that happens a shift occurs and God's Word, Prayer, Witnessing and Fellowship aren't ends in themselves. Instead they are guides to keep you focused on and surrendered to Jesus.

It is important to remember, Jesus is already the center of everything Consider:

"And he [Jesus] is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ... He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent," (Colossians 1:17-18 ESV)

"And God put all things under [Jesus'] feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Ephesians 1:22-23:)

My friend, Jean Fleming, recently shared, "Jesus is from beginning to end. All dominion and power belong to Him. And for all eternity, He is the center of everything. The spokes are really Jesus' life coming to us and then us responding to Him. This goes both ways. and there is a flow of joy all throughout this.

The main thing in all of time and eternity is that God has designed that Christ is the one who does it, he's the creator, but more than that, all of creation is for Him and it's like everything is a gift. We are a gift to him from the Father.

The wheel is a reminder of ways that we can engage to make us more aware and responsive to who he is."

During different seasons of life the spokes on the wheel may take different shapes. The goal isn't to read a certain number of verses or chapters a day, or to pray for a specified amount of time. Instead it's to follow Jesus incorporating each of these gifts as He directs you to. and as you follow Him in this, relying on His strength to do so.

Jean shares, "This is what it is to abide. Jesus' life is coming to us and we are responding. It's like respiration. He breathes out, and we are responsive to His breath. Living the life that Jesus refers to in John 10:10 is about His life coming to us. We become a new creation as Jesus gives us a heart and spirit to receive his life. He is the one who gives us a desire, who opens our eyes and gives us a heart to share the gospel, who puts a love for the brethren in us that makes fellowshiping with other believers who we wouldn't ordinarily be drawn to, who we love, he is the source of all these things and prayer is really his breath, his life in us stirring and engaging us. Everything starts with him and the wheel is a response to that."

What thoughts come to mind as you consider this?

Twenty years Ago...

After the Navigators asked us to move to the University of South Florida, I received a text from a student. "I am so excited you are coming! I can't wait to meet with you!" What a wonderful welcome!

But one of the challenges of moving to a new location and joining an existing ministry is you don't know what the students have already learned.

During our first meeting, I asked the student, "Do you know the Wheel Illustration?"

"Oh yes!" She nodded.

"Great! Why don't you draw it for me."

She sat back and bit her lower lip. "Well, I know it's round." She drew a circle. "But...". After a few minutes, she said, "Maybe I don't know it. I did hear about it in a workshop once."

Since then, I've learned even people who can draw the illustration and correctly label each part often don't "know" the Wheel Illustration.

My friend, Jean Fleming, states, "After a tool has been passed on 4 or 5 times it often loses the heart." Especially when it's taught in a short workshop or during a NavNight message."

When I first learned this illustration nearly 40 years ago it didn't make much difference in my life... and that was also true for the first pack of the Topical Memory System whose verses correspond directly to the different parts of the Wheel Illustration.

There is a difference between information and transformation.

Taking time to consider the history and heart of this illustration as well as to dive into the Scriptures related to this has resulted in the latter.

Makes me think Dawson Trotman was on to something!

Developing A Rhythm for Creative Meditation

During this first week we are going to explore what the Bible has to say about life. This booklet is not primarily a Bible study but a tool for helping you grow in learning how to meditate on the Scriptures for life. This first week may feel more like a Bible study as we seek to lay a foundation for what we'll be covering in the next eight weeks. Even so, I encourage you to keep pondering as you go about your day. You might be surprised at the treasure that arises as you continue thinking about this.

Working through this resource will require around 15 minutes a day to meditatively do a little Bible study and then 15 minutes a day to creatively meditate. The intent is to spark you pondering God's Word so you can chew on it throughout the day. Can it ever be helpful if you do this at the start of your day. But when is the start of a day?

Read Genesis 1:5, 8, 13, 19, 23, 31 and consider, according to God when does each "day" begin?

And there was evening
and there was morning
the first day.

Genesis 1:5

Why do you think God starts each day where He does? What might be the meaning of this? And the implications?

How could this impact the way you think about your days?

What difference could it make in your life if you embraced this view of a day?

Considering this, when might you like to invest time taking in the daily content to ponder? It really is up to you when you decide to do this, however, early Navigators often sought to jumpstart their days each night. Dawson Trotman even coined the saying "His Word the Last Word" and sought to always let God's Word be the last thing on his mind as he drifted off to sleep at the biblical "beginning" of each day. Record on the next page your plan for working through this resource.

What's your Why?

Take a moment to consider - why are you doing this? What do you hope to get out of this? Share your heart with Jesus and record below what motivates you to make time to creatively meditate on God's Word for the next eight weeks.

Where and When will you do this?

According to James Clear, author of Atomic Habits,
to change your behavior, ask yourself:

How can I make it obvious?

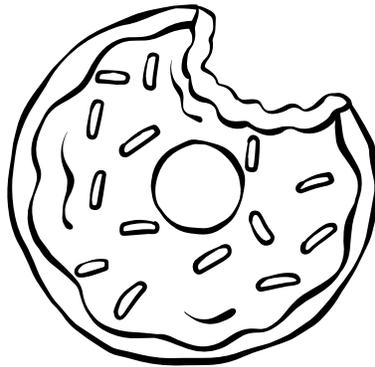
How can I make it attractive?

How can I make it easy?

How can I make it satisfying?



WARNING: EVEN THE BEST OF FOOD ISN'T DELIGHTFUL IF YOU EAT TOO MUCH. EACH OF US HAS BEEN CREATED UNIQUE. THERE IS A TON TO NOURISH YOU IN THIS STUDY, BUT PLEASE FOLLOW JESUS IN YOUR CONSUMPTION!



GET YOUR BITE & CHEW!

THE GOAL IS NOT TO FINISH EACH PAGE, BUT TO MEDITATE. WHEN I DO QUIET TIMES I READ UNTIL SOMETHING STANDS OUT TO ME, THEN SPEND TIME WITH JESUS CHEWING ON THAT. PLEASE DO THE SAME WITH THIS BOOKLET! WORK THROUGH THE MATERIAL UNTIL YOU FIND A NOURISHING MORSEL TO CHEW - AND THEN MEDITATE ON THAT! YOU CAN ALWAYS COME BACK LATER TO TAKE ANOTHER BITE.

The Spirit of God has made me,
And the breath of the Almighty gives me life.

Job 33:4

Day 1

Where Does Life Come From?

Read Genesis 1:1 and write this verse below:

Why do you think the Bible begins with this verse?

What do you observe about God from this verse?

What else?

What else?

What else?

Share with God your response to what you've just observed:

How does this relate to Life?

What difference can knowing this make in your life?

Creatively Meditating for Life!



“In the beginning God created...” When God introduces Himself this is the first thing He highlights. God is not only the Creator of everything, He is creative. Visit a zoo or a botanical garden and you will see abundant evidence! According to Genesis 1:26 we were created in His image, which includes being created to be creative, too. All of us. Not only gifted artists.

Young children instinctively get this. Give them art supplies and they dive in having fun creating. It doesn't matter what it looks like. Every time my three year old neighbor sees me, she cries, “Paint! Paint! Miss Debbie!” She is eager to create. Uninhibited. And she does so with joy.

We were created to create. This is also reflected in how our brains are made. Part of our brain is verbal, another part visual. Remember the greatest command - to love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength? You need to process both verbally and visually, to love the Lord with all your mind.

We were created to create and when we don't, it impacts our soul. The enemy knows this. Often when children reach the ages of 8-10, the enemy goes out of his way to shut them down through comparison, shame and fear. Or with those who are gifted artists, he often tries to get them focused on the art so it's not about playing, exploring, delighting, but the final product. As they grow, pressure often grows.

This course is an opportunity to take back what the enemy has been robbing you of. Creatively meditating is not about what the final product looks like, but what happens inside when you take time to create, especially as it provides opportunity to listen to the Lord in powerful, life-giving ways. During this course we will begin with coloring pages, learning seven different ways to use them to creatively meditate. Each week a different creative process will be highlighted. I challenge you to experiment, to step outside your comfort zone, and try something new. You might be surprised at how much life this adds to your life!

Coloring Pages

There is coloring and then there is coloring with Jesus. Remember the whole reason we are doing this is to find new ways to help us meditate and remember Christ is the center of our everything.

What can it look like for you to do this?

I love to talk with him as I'm coloring. But sometimes as I'm coloring, through the ideas he gives or the colors he leads me to select he speaks to me. Recently he led me to not color in the lines but instead watercolor on top of the coloring page's design. And then add ink on top of that. It was so fun! So don't feel like you have to be speaking non-stop. Leave time to listen. It's more, are you doing this staying aware of His presence?

Remember, there isn't a formula for doing this. Different things bring delight for different people. And what connects your heart to Jesus may even be different during different seasons and times. Have fun experimenting with Him I've found the greatest joy, no matter what I do, comes as I do this with him. As the psalmist says, in Psalm 16:11 "You fill me with joy in your presence." May it be so!

Day 1 Suggestion: OUTLINE

On the following coloring page the letters and design have been made transparent. I like to use a black pen to go over the faint outlines on the page. As I do, I often sing or give thanks to Jesus for everything I can think of as I draw near to listen (pun intended :0) What might it have looked like when God created the heavens? There weren't any stars yet. Or what comes to mind when you picture the Spirit of God hovering? Capture any new insights by writing in the margin around the page.

In the
beginning,
God created
the heavens and
the earth.



the earth was without
form and void,
and darkness was over
the face of the deep.



And
the Spirit of God
was hovering
over the face
of the waters.

Genesis 1:1-3

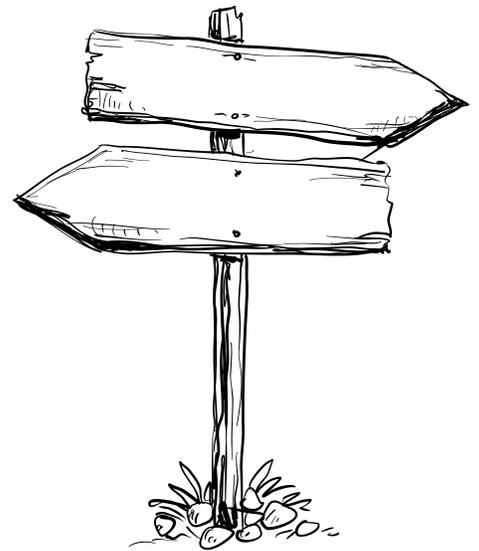


Processing Page

What stood out to you as you creatively meditated today?

What key thing stood out to you about God?

How does this connect to your life?



What do you sense the Lord inviting you to do in response?



Make a careful exploration
of who you are and
the work you have been given,
and then
sink yourself into that.

Don't be impressed with yourself.
Don't compare yourself with others.
Each of you must take responsibility
for doing the creative best
you can with your own life.

Galatian 6:4-5



Day 2

Consider Cross References

Read Genesis 1:1-3 and highlight every time you see God's name

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. 2 The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. 3 And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. 4 And God saw that the light was good. And God separated the light from the darkness. 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Why do you think God created everything by speaking? He could've snapped his fingers, blinked his eyes, waved his hand. Why did he speak?

Read John 1:1-3 and verse 14 and highlight every time you see the Lord mentioned.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made through him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. 4 In him was life, and the life was the light of men. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it... 14 And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

So who is the Word?

What role did listening play in creation?



Listen to Live



God listens! Genesis 1 shows us what happens when perfect listening takes place. It's pretty powerful if you have time to go through Genesis 1 and circle all the times the word "said" appears. There was a lot of listening involved in the Creation of everything!

Being created in the image of God means we were created to listen and to be listened to! Our ability to form healthy attachments attests to this as it is based in large part on whether we were listened to... or not.

How do you feel when someone really listens to you? How often does that happen?

One of the best gifts we can ever give someone is to listen to them. If someone wasn't listened to while growing up, research has shown they can heal by being listened to! Listening well is a key way of loving well the people around us.

But here's one crazy thing - in his book The Lost Art of Listening Michael P. Nichols shares you can't just say "Well I'll stop talking and become a good listener." Studies have shown to listen well, you first need to be listened to.

Do you realize what a gift it is that the Lord is available 24/7 to listen to us?

To listen is so much more than just hearing. In the Creation of the world, Jesus didn't only hear the father's words, He acted on them perfectly. But it's also important who we listen to. That's why the Lord longs for us to listen to Him. Consider his invitation in Isaiah 55:1-3.

"Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. 3 Incline your ear, and come to me; hear, that your soul may live;"

God doesn't want us to listen because He needs us to. He knows we need this. As he says, our souls need this to live.

Coloring Pages

Have you noticed there is more than one coloring page for today? You only need to do one. But I've placed a second option there so you can select which verse most connects with where you are at now.

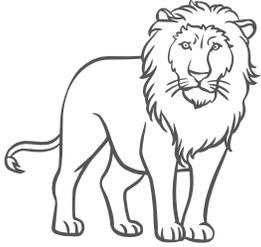
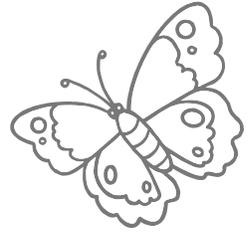
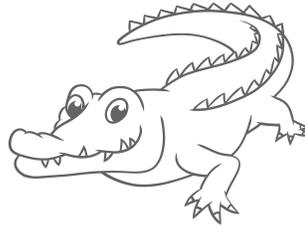
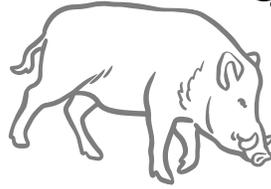
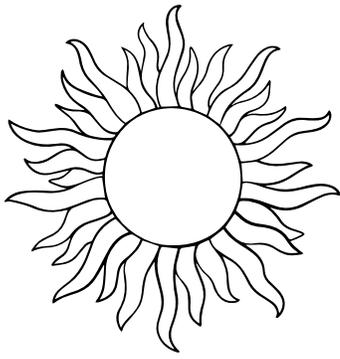
Jean Fleming has shared with me many times about the benefit of layering. Coming back to sit with Jesus and meditate on things you've studied or meditated on before adds layers to what you are learning, helping it sink even deeper into your heart. The second page can be enjoyed at a later date when you sense Jesus calling you to ponder more on who He has revealed Himself to be through creation.

Day 2 Suggestion: PRESSURE VARIATIONS

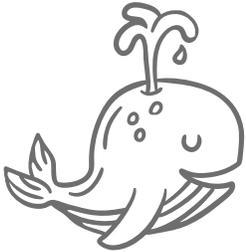
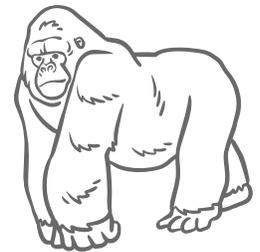
If you are using colored pencils or crayons you can have fun with pressure variations. When you press down hard, the color will be bold. The lighter you press, the more your coloring will be translucent. You can alternate one section in bold, another light or fade from bold to light in each section. I encourage you to experiment and play with this!

And remember, it's not about the art! You don't have to complete an entire page, in fact, you can be selective and let what you're coloring guide your meditating or vice versa. For example, as you color in the sun on the next page you could ponder, "This resulted from listening."

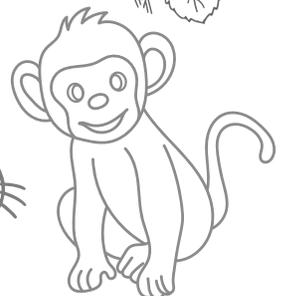
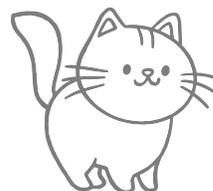
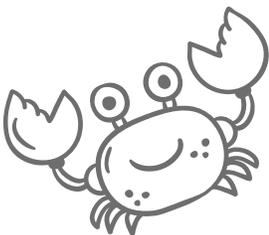
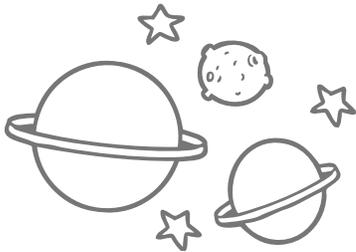
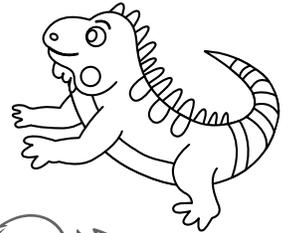
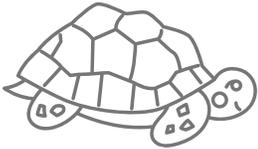
Above all, enjoy your time with Jesus! I hope you have a ton of fun discovering new ways to listen to Him & feast on His Word.



IN THE BEGINNING
WAS THE WORD,
AND THE WORD WAS
WITH GOD,
AND THE WORD
WAS GOD.



HE WAS IN THE
BEGINNING WITH GOD.
ALL THINGS WERE
MADE THROUGH HIM,
AND WITHOUT HIM
WAS NOT ANY THING
MADE THAT WAS
MADE.



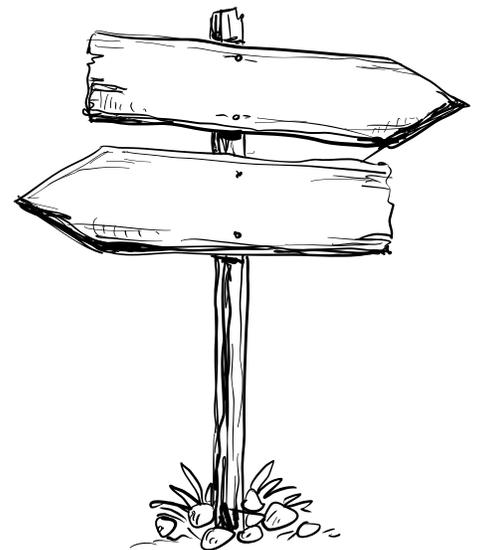


Processing Page

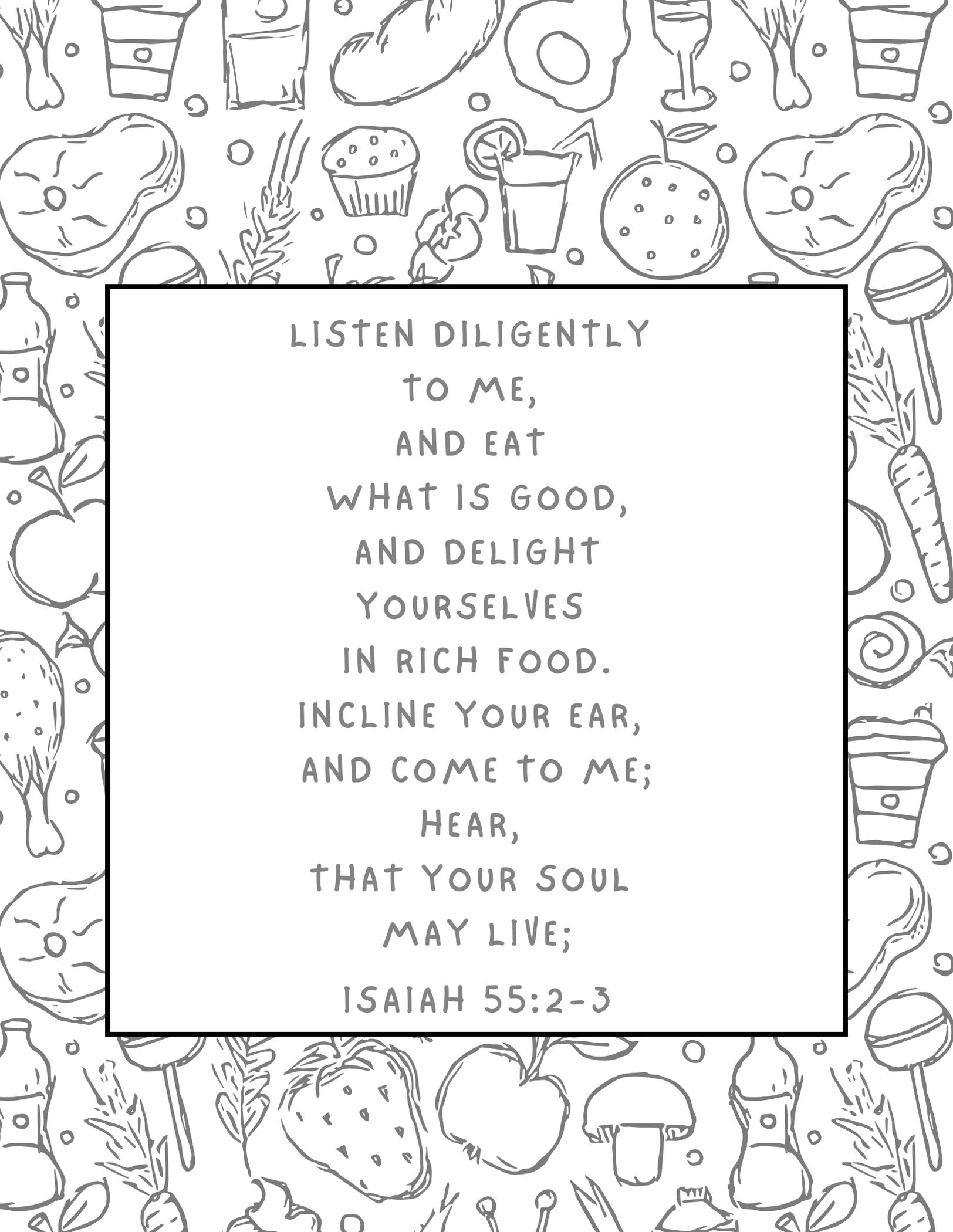
What stood out to you as you creatively meditated today?

What key thing stood out to you about God?

How does this connect to your life?



What do you sense the Lord inviting you to do in response?

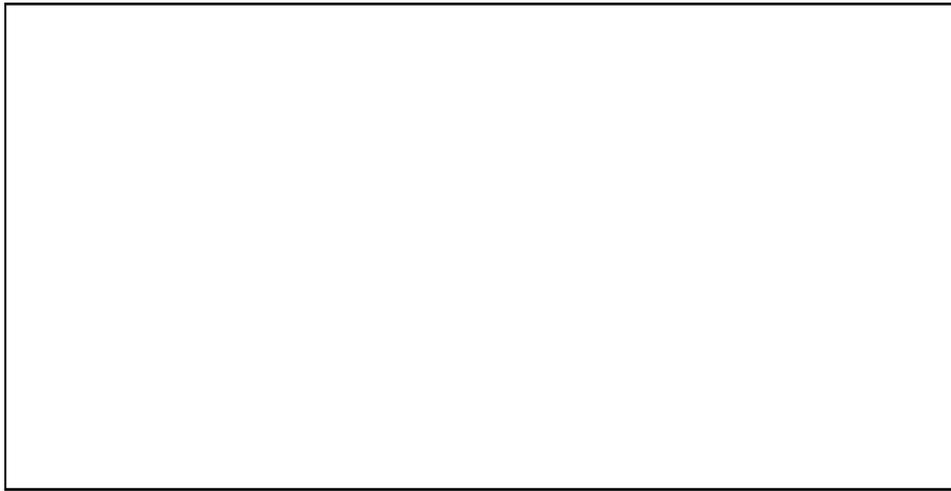


LISTEN DILIGENTLY
TO ME,
AND EAT
WHAT IS GOOD,
AND DELIGHT
YOURSELVES
IN RICH FOOD.
INCLINE YOUR EAR,
AND COME TO ME;
HEAR,
THAT YOUR SOUL
MAY LIVE;
ISAIAH 55:2-3

Day 3

Life Comes in the Context of Intimacy

Read Genesis 2:7. Use your imagination to picture what the creation of man looked like. Either draw a picture or describe below what you see happening in this verse.



What do you observe about God in this verse?

What else?

What else?

What else?

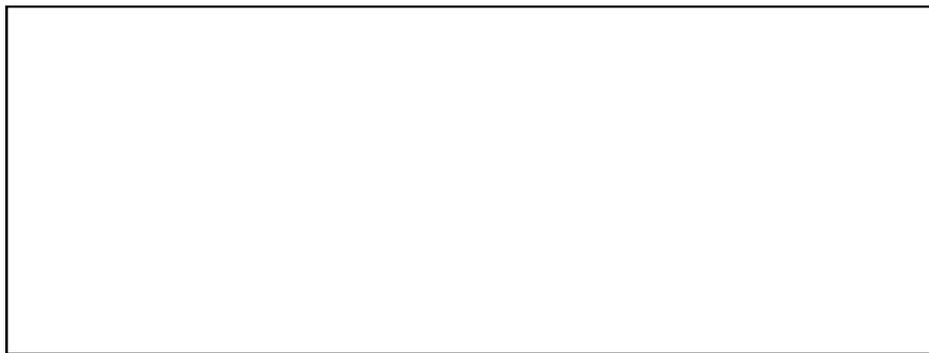
Consider the definition of intimacy: close familiarity or friendship: closeness. How does this relate to Genesis 2:7. What thoughts come to mind as you consider this?

Life comes from God. Life occurred in the context of intimacy with God. God didn't have to originally create man this way. He could've snapped his fingers from a distance or uttered a command. Why do you think he lets us see Him creating man in this way?

Is this only true for Adam? How involved, how close was God when you were created? Read Psalm 139:13-14

For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

What do you picture when you read these verses? Use your imagination to picture this verse before answering the questions. For example, have you ever knitted anything extremely detailed? If so, what was that like? If not, what do you imagine that would be like? Draw below whatever comes to mind.



Where do you see evidence of intimacy in these verses?

What thoughts come to mind as you consider this?
Share your thoughts with Jesus in the space below:

Coloring Pages

Remember the goal is to enjoy time with Jesus as you creatively meditate on His word. You don't have to complete a page to do this. In fact, any page you don't complete is available for you to come back to and enjoy even more time with Him, adding new layers and gaining new understanding whenever you sense Him leading you to. You want to cultivate a rhythm for doing this. So 15 minutes a day every day with pages not completed can be better than an hour every once in a while to complete a whole page.

Day 3 Suggestion: BLENDING

Blending colors together can be so fun and yield incredible beauty. Just be sure to begin with a soft hand. You can always go darker. And you can do this with crayons, colored pencils or Tombow markers.

Sometimes I will select two colors like blue and purple and lightly blend them as a background behind my verse. This gives such a lovely effect! Other times I do this right on top of a printed pattern. This can be one of the most calming techniques, especially if you select soft colors. You can do this with colored pencils or crayons or even pastels if you have them.

Organic surfaces are not only one color. For example, in a canopy of trees you will find many different shades of green. So when you blend colors together it can help make what you're coloring look more lifelike and increase your awareness of what you are seeing if you try to capture the color of an object around you.

I decided to use the Tombow Dual Brush Pens Secondary collection for the potter's hands and the clay. I discovered for the clay if I layered the orange, yellow and red then put the two lighter brown tones on top of that, then outlined the clay with the dark brown it really did look like rich earth/clay!. You can have a ton of fun playing with this!

And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.

Genesis 2:7



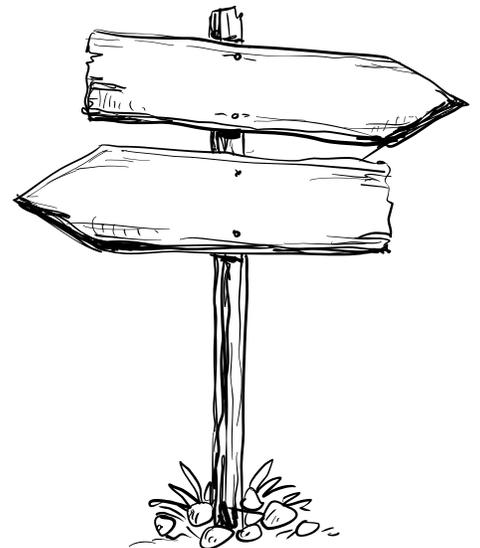


Processing Page

What stood out to you as you
creatively meditated today?

What key thing stood out to you about God?

How does this connect to your life?



What do you sense the Lord inviting you to do in response?

For you created
my inmost being;
you knit me together
in my mother's womb.
I praise you because
I am fearfully and
wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

Psalm 139:13-14

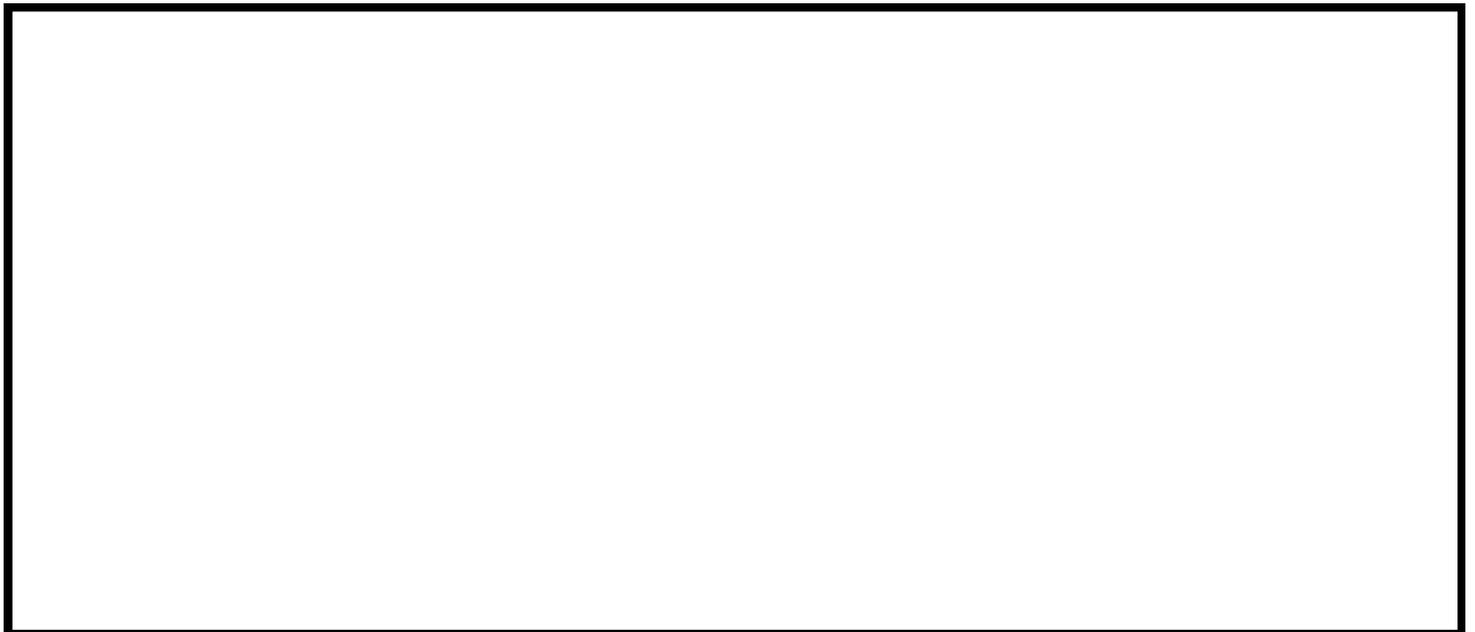


Day 4

What Is Necessary for Life?

As you read Genesis 2:8-17 sketch a picture in the box below of where the Lord placed the man

And the Lord God planted a garden in Eden, in the east, and there he put the man whom he had formed. 9 And out of the ground the Lord God made to spring up every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. 10 A river flowed out of Eden to water the garden, and there it divided and became four rivers. 11 The name of the first is the Pishon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold. 12 And the gold of that land is good; bdellium and onyx stone are there. 13 The name of the second river is the Gihon. It is the one that flowed around the whole land of Cush. 14 And the name of the third river is the Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates. 15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. 16 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."



What stood out to you as you sketched?

According to Genesis 2:15 what purpose did the Lord have for Adam in the garden?

The word "Keep" can also be translated "guard." Why did the man need to guard the garden? Who did he need to guard it from?

How might Genesis 2:16 relate to that?

What do you learn about God from this?

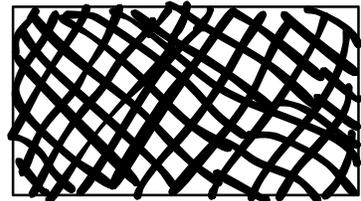
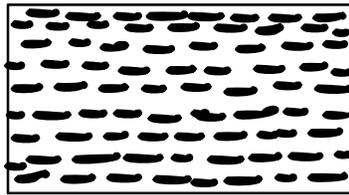
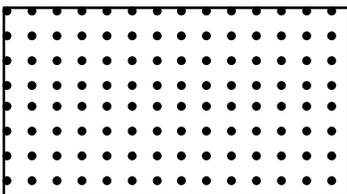
How does what the Lord highlighted for you as you've been pondering His Word with Him connect to your life?

Coloring Pages

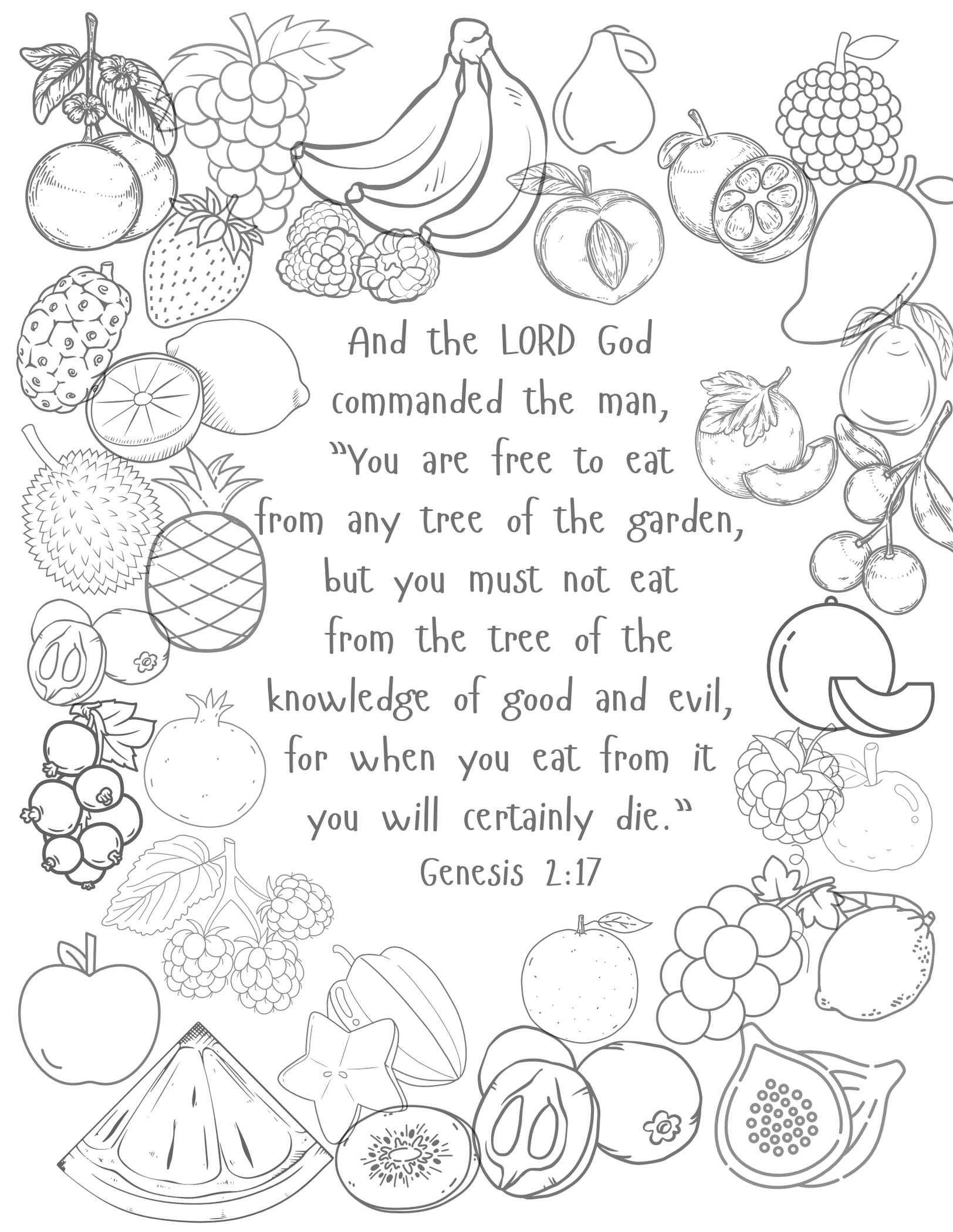
One of the things I love most about creatively meditating with Jesus is how it can help me be present with him, but I find I have to be intentional for this to happen. All too often I catch myself getting sidetracked by the art and can forget His presence. If this happens to you don't beat yourself up. Have you ever seen a parent take delight in watching a child play, especially when the child is having lots of fun? That's how your Heavenly Father feels about you! A key benefit of seeking to be intentionally aware of His presence is it often doesn't come naturally so this is a great opportunity to grow, like Brother Lawrence did in his kitchen (see The Practice of the Presence of God).

Day 4 Suggestion: ADD TEXTURE

Texture can be added by not solidly coloring in a section but putting dots or dashes or drawing squares for bricks. Cross hatching is also a great way to add texture (draw lines in one direction, then on top draw lines in another direction).



You can also add texture by putting something with texture underneath the page you are coloring. I love to take paper towels or use a screen or bubble wrap. What's fun is you can have a treasure hunt going around your home looking for things with texture to place under what you are coloring. Corrugated cardboard, string, flooring... Just be forewarned the more textured something is, the more it may take its toll on the other side of your page, so you might want to color lightly!



And the LORD God
commanded the man,
"You are free to eat
from any tree of the garden,
but you must not eat
from the tree of the
knowledge of good and evil,
for when you eat from it
you will certainly die."

Genesis 2:17

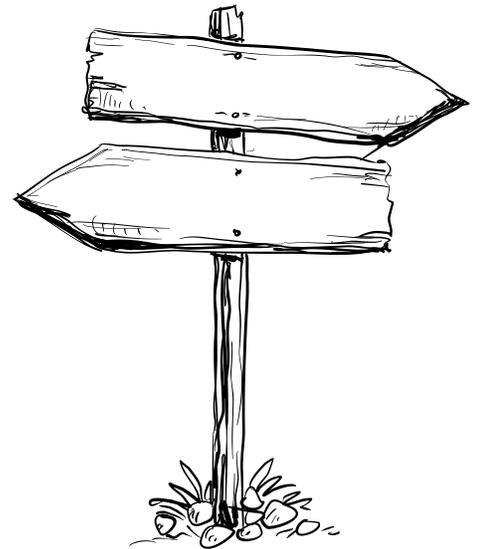


Processing Page

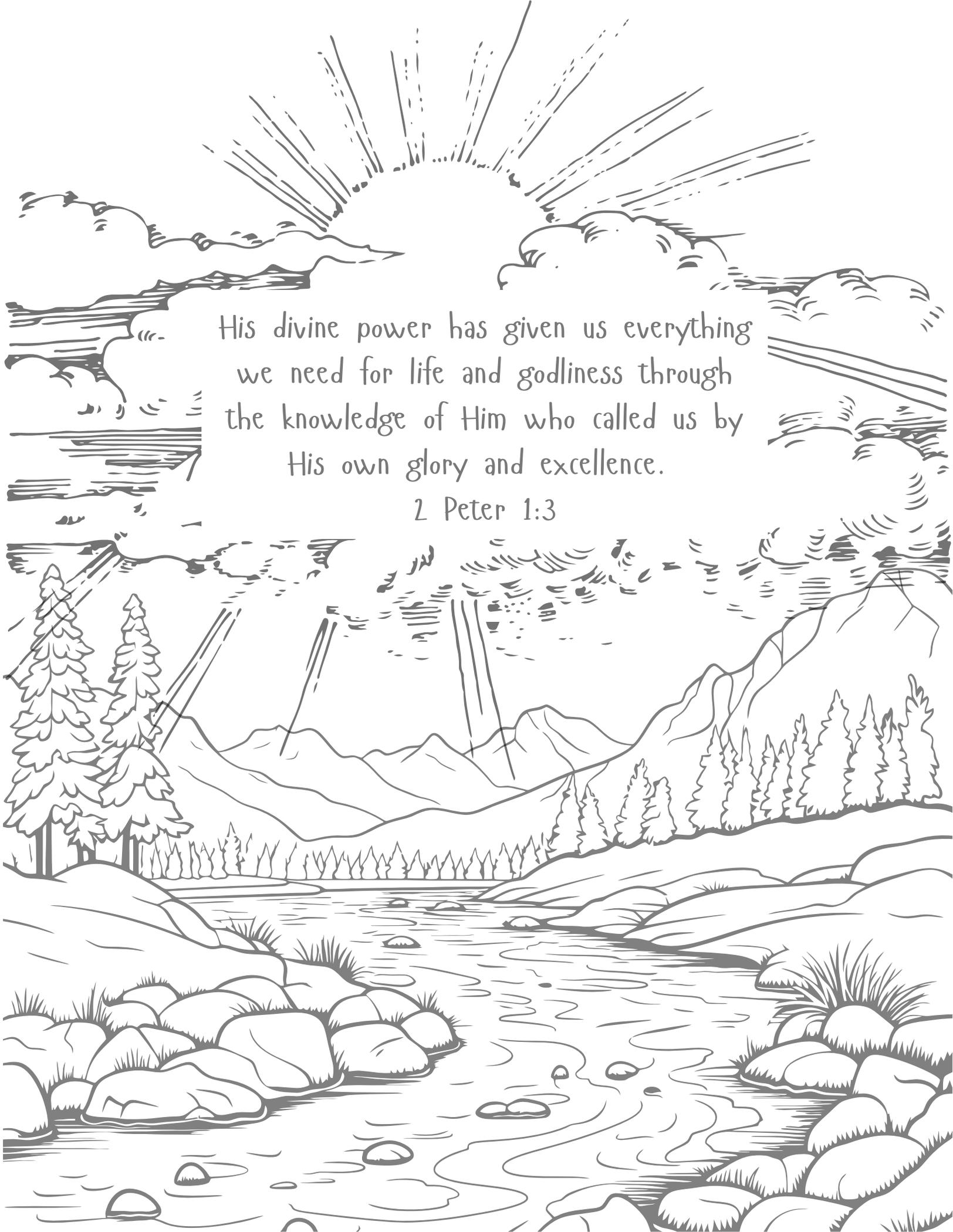
What stood out to you as you creatively meditated today?

What key thing stood out to you about God?

How does this connect to your life?



What do you sense the Lord inviting you to do in response?



His divine power has given us everything
we need for life and godliness through
the knowledge of Him who called us by
His own glory and excellence.

2 Peter 1:3

Day 5

The Loss of Life

Read Genesis 3:1-7.

Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the Lord God had made.

He said to the woman, "Did God actually say, 'You shall not eat of any tree in the garden?'"

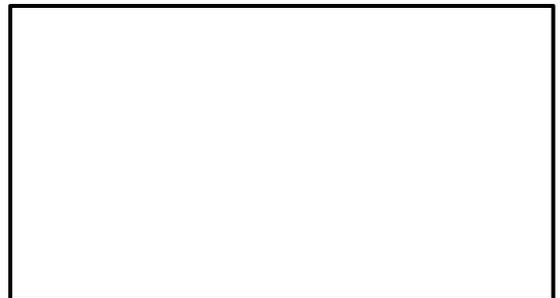
2 And the woman said to the serpent, "We may eat of the fruit of the trees in the garden, 3 but God said, 'You shall not eat of the fruit of the tree that is in the midst of the garden, neither shall you touch it, lest you die.'"

4 But the serpent said to the woman, "You will not surely die. 5 For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."

6 So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

7 Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths.

Draw what you picture happened:



What role did listening (and not listening) play in this story?

Read Genesis 3:8-24 and underline what happened
because they didn't listen to God.

And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.⁹ But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?"¹⁰ And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself."¹¹ He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?"¹² The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate."¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."¹⁴ The Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life.¹⁵ I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel."¹⁶ To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."¹⁷ And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; ¹⁸ thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. ¹⁹ By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."²⁰ The man called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living. ²¹ And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them. ²² Then the Lord God said, "Behold, the man has become like one of us in knowing good and evil. Now, lest he reach out his hand and take also of the tree of life and eat, and live forever—" ²³ therefore the Lord God sent him out from the garden of Eden to work the ground from which he was taken. ²⁴ He drove out the man, and at the east of the garden of Eden he placed the cherubim and a flaming sword that turned every way to guard the way to the tree of life.

What happened because Adam and Eve didn't listen to God?

According to the following verses, what else happened?

1 Corinthians 15:2. For as in Adam all die,
so also in Christ shall all be made alive.

Ephesians 2:1 As for you, you were
dead in your transgressions and sins,

Ephesians 4:18. They are darkened in their
understanding and alienated from the life of
God because of the ignorance that is in them
due to the hardness of their hearts.

When Paul wrote to the Ephesians he used the Greek word νεκρος
(transliterated nek-ros) which metaphorically means “spiritually dead, destitute
of a life that recognizes and is devoted to God, because given up to trespasses
and sins.” Note: the word destitute means “without the basic necessities of
life.”

Why did God cast them out of the garden? Why was this important?

How does your heart respond to what you've sensed Jesus highlighting for
you today? Share this with Jesus in the space below:

Coloring Pages

Remember the goal is to enjoy time with Jesus as you creatively meditate on His word. You don't have to complete a page to do this. In fact, any page you don't complete is available for you to come back to and enjoy even more time with Him, adding new layers and gaining new understanding whenever you sense Him leading you to. You want to cultivate a rhythm for doing this. So 15 minutes a day every day with pages not completed can be better than an hour every once in a while to complete a whole page.

The shading exercise you get to do today is one of my favorites! But in 15 minutes I only did about a half a page using a black pen. I didn't even have time to color it. But I'm looking forward to coming back & enjoying more time with Jesus!)

Day 5 Suggestion: SHADING

Adding shadows to your coloring can really make it pop! Remember to select where the light source is coming from. I like to picture an imaginary lamp in the corner of my page and think where the shadow for each object might fall on the opposite side. Taking time to observe a real shadow can help. Note how the shadow follows the shape of the object with a smooth edge.

I like to do this with a black pen, but you can also add a neat effect by shading with a color from the opposite side of the color wheel. For example, if you colored an object orange, try using blue for the shading. This can add depth and give a whole different feeling to your page, especially if you blend them a bit where the colors meet.

In the second coloring page you can have fun darkening some of the lines. These dark lines may not be related to a "light source" but adding dark lines to a page can really add contrast. If you use Tombow Dual Brush markers they usually will not bleed onto the other side (versus if you use a black sharpie it will be seen on the other side).

As for you, you were
dead in your transgressions and sins,
Ephesians 2:1



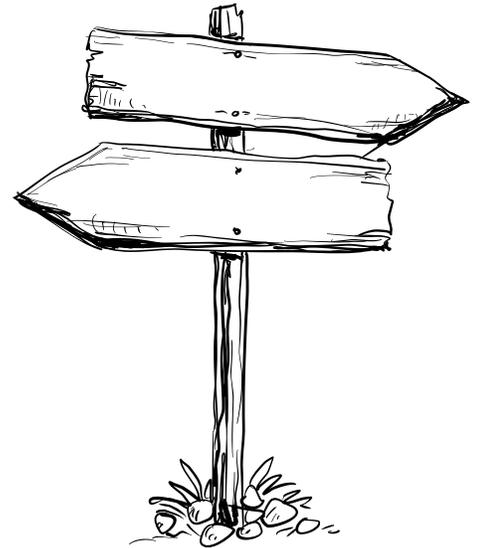


Processing Page

What stood out to you as you creatively meditated today?

What key thing stood out to you about God?

How does this connect to your life?



What do you sense the Lord inviting you to do in response?

For as in Adam all die,
so also in Christ shall all
be made alive.

1 Corinthians 15:22



Day 6

God's Invitation for New Life

For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will. 22 For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, 23 that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Whoever does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent him. 24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life.

25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself.

John 5:21-26

What do you learn about Jesus from these verses?

What do you learn about life from these verses?

What did God do?

What is our part?

What do you think it looks like to do this?

Consider...

When God created man, he breathed into his nostrils and man became a living being. Life came as man received into the depths of himself what God offered. So in Christ we need to receive him to be born again and experience life! Becoming a Christian isn't just about knowing in your head or even mentally believing Jesus is who he says he is or even in what he did. Even the Demons believe in God! (James 2:19)

To all who did receive him who believed in his name
he gave the right to become children of God.
Who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,
nor of the will of man but of God.

John 1:12-13

We must receive Jesus. In the Greek, this means to receive Him in order to obey Him!

Just knowing there is a loaf of bread on the table, even believing there is a loaf of bread on the table, doesn't nourish you. You must take the bread and eat it, taking it into you, to experience life from it.

So what role does intimacy play in this?

What do you learn about Jesus and life from John 10:10?

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy.
I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

What thoughts come to mind as you consider John 7:38-39?

Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said,
rivers of living water will flow from within them.
By this he meant the Spirit,
whom those who believed in him were later to receive.
Up to that time the Spirit had not been given,
since Jesus had not yet been glorified.

Coloring Pages

Day 6 Suggestion: MIXED MEDIA

I love mixing different art supplies together on a page. To me this is the ultimately in playing, discovering new combinations - the possibilities are endless. For example, if you take a white crayon and color in portions of a coloring page then go over it with a dark water color - like a rich blue or green (or both!) Can your picture ever pop!

Or after using watercolor to color in my page, it is so fun to go back over the outline with a black marker!

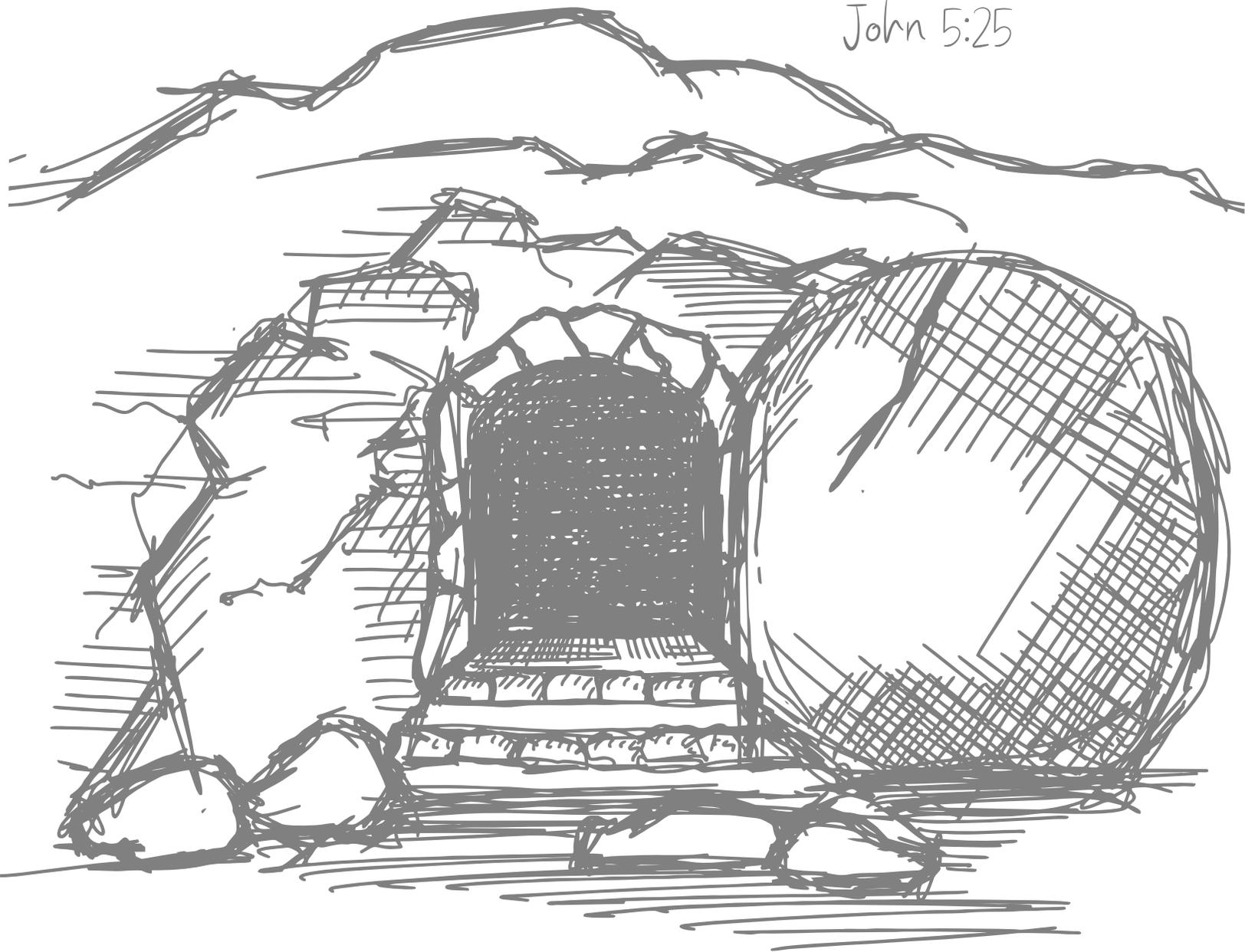
And remember, you don't have to color inside the lines! It can be so much fun to do circles of different colors on top of a coloring page design or blocks of colors sporadically painted on the page.

This is your sixth day. Draw from the different techniques you tried this week and see what happens when you put them together on one page! You may discover a new technique that looks spectacular - or it may end up a mess. Remember this isn't about creating something to sell or hand in a museum. What does Jesus want to say to you about the mess or the beauty?

Some of my favorite creations have happened when I've totally blown it and wished I hadn't put on my page. But I have a rule that I never tear out a page. Instead I take my mistakes to Jesus and ask Him, "Now what?" Without fail, I know my redeemer lives because I have experienced Him redeeming my messes, giving me new ideas that open up whole new worlds for creating. Don't be afraid to risk with Jesus. I have learned and grown so much through doing this!

Truly, truly,
I say to you,
an hour is coming,
and is now here,
when the dead will hear
the voice of the Son of God,
and those who hear will live.

John 5:25



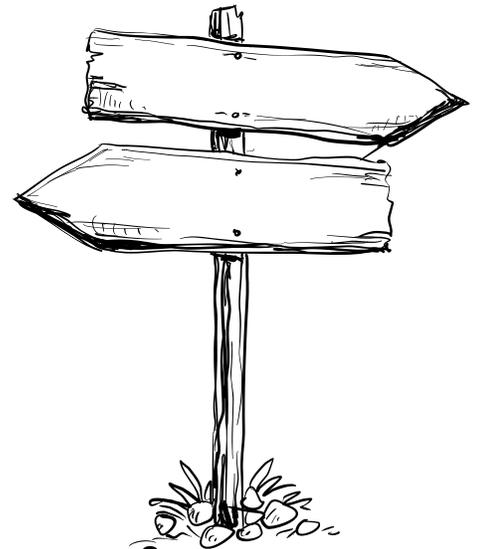


Processing Page

What stood out to you as you creatively meditated today?

What key thing stood out to you about God?

How does this connect to your life?



What do you sense the Lord inviting you to do in response?

Now this is eternal life
that they may know you
the only true God
and Jesus Christ
whom you have sent.

John 17:3



Day 1

The Struggle for Life

“And to the angel of the church in Laodicea LOOK:
write: ‘The words of the Amen, the faithful and
true witness, the beginning of God's creation.

15 “I know your works: you are neither cold nor
hot. Would that you were either cold or hot! 16 LISTEN:
So, because you are lukewarm, and neither hot
nor cold, I will spit you out of my mouth. 17 For
you say, I am rich, I have prospered, and I need
nothing, not realizing that you are wretched,
pitiable, poor, blind, and naked. 18 I counsel you
to buy from me gold refined by fire, so that you
may be rich, and white garments so that you
may clothe yourself and the shame of your
nakedness may not be seen, and salve to anoint
your eyes, so that you may see. 19 Those whom
I love, I reprove and discipline, so be zealous and
repent. 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock.
If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I
will come in to him and eat with him, and he
with me. 21 The one who conquers, I will grant
him to sit with me on my throne, as I also LIVE IT OUT:
conquered and sat down with my father on his
throne. 22 He who has an ear, let him hear
what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Revelation 3:14-22

When God created man he didn't blow air into him as if he were a balloon! That first breath began an interaction between us and God that every breath we continue to take is a living picture of!

True Story

Even as I work on this I am struggling. Fighting distractions left and right. And I am so easily distracted. I look up a Bible verse and an ad announcing a sale at one of my favorite stores pops up. Want to guess who ends up checking to see what the deals are?

I can waste so much time throughout the day. Worse, I struggle to make decisions: Should I buy this? Should I buy something else? And if so which color and size would be best? And is there a coupon code that could save even more? My thoughts become filled with "things."

I've completely forgotten I went to that web page to look up a verse. The "deceitfulness of riches" has crowded out God's Word (Mark 4:19). Next thing I know an hour has passed. Christ isn't at the center. Shopping for a deal is. And, in that beautiful new top, I am looking for comfort, for joy, for life!

This isn't only true for me! The apostle Paul wrote:

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do but what I hate I do. For I have the desire to what is good but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do, no the evil I do not want to do this I keep on doing!

Romans 7:15

Where do you struggle to live out of the reality that Jesus is the center of everything?

It can be easy to say "Life comes from God." But living out of this truth for all of your life is one of the hardest things anyone will ever do. Do you agree? Why or why not?

Timothy Keller defines an idol as anything other than Jesus that we put in the blank, "I need _____ for my life to have value and meaning." What have you put into this blank? Where else do you look for life?

Why is it a problem to look to things or people other than Jesus for life?

Why is it such a struggle to only look to Jesus for life?

The good news is God doesn't expect you to do this alone! He loves it when we ask Him to help us seek Him! Share your heart with Jesus in the space below:

Coloring Pages

Have you ever tried coloring your feelings?

One night, after I'd lost all of my hearing, I woke up at 3 in the morning feeling overcome with sadness over all I was missing. Since I couldn't sleep, I went into my art room and painted an entire page black as I poured out my heart to Jesus.

This was so helpful! Especially as I sensed Him direct me next to use red and cover the page, remembering how He paid so dearly to take care of all the brokenness in the world, including all of my sin.

After I did that the page looked brown, like a rich mud and I sensed the Lord leading me to pick up green paint so I started making dashes on the page then realized they looked like blades of grass. After I did this, I sensed the Lord saying, "It may look dark and hopeless now, but just wait. You are going to be amazed at what I am growing in you during this dark season."

Then I sensed him lay on my heart 1 Thessalonians 5:18, "In everything give thanks." So I did. And the peace that came really did surpass all understanding.

Day 7 Suggestion: COLOR YOUR FEELINGS

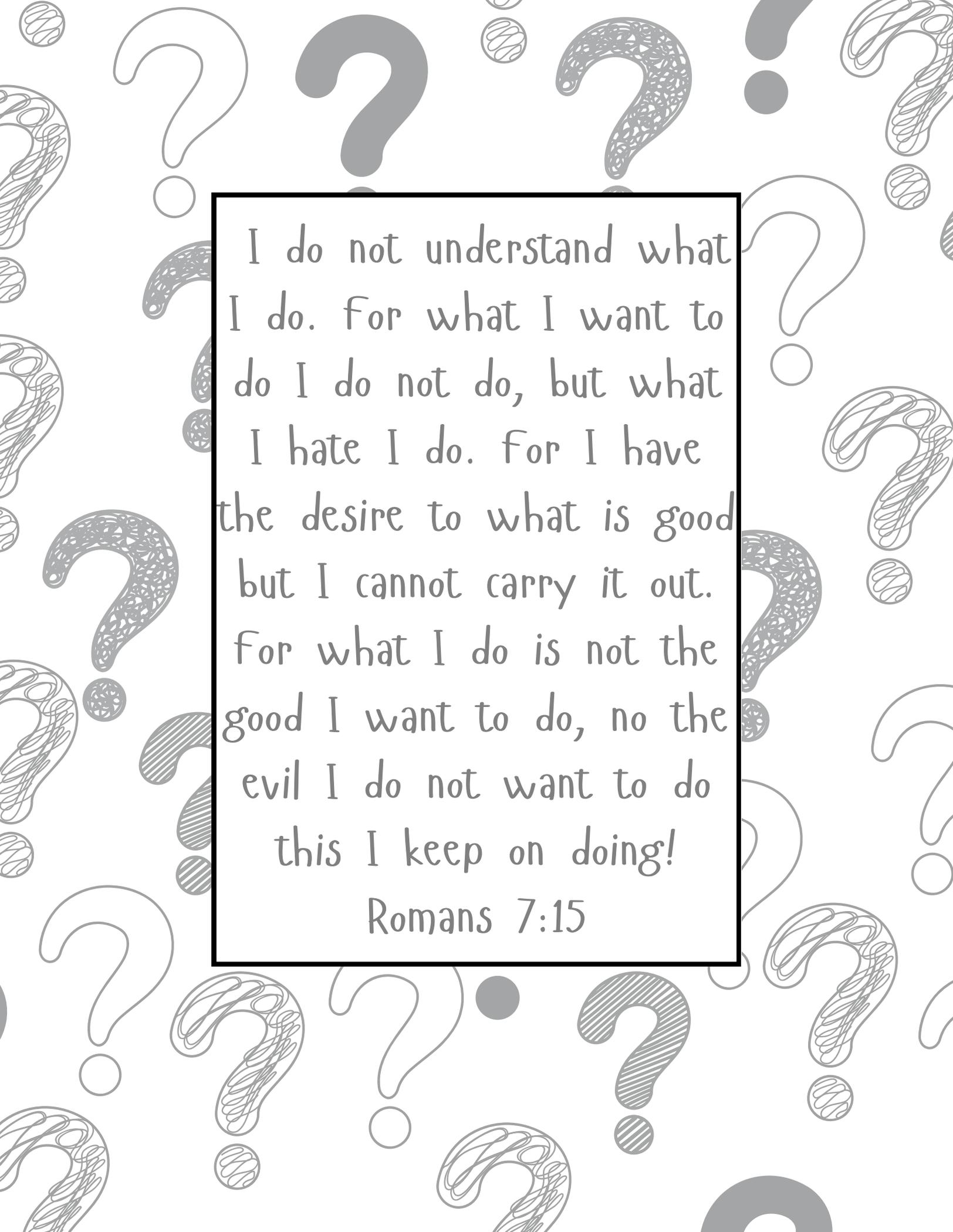
List the emotions you most commonly feel, then assign a color to each one. As you use each color on your page, think about times when you have felt the associated emotion. This can be something recent or from your past. As you share this with Jesus, it can be a powerful way to lament, processing the hard as well as joys of life with Him.

Color Legend:

Record below the emotions you've been feeling lately. Then assign a color to each one. For example: Anger - Red, Happy - Yellow, Envious - Green, Depressed - Blue are traditional color associations. But you can select any color you want. You may not blow up when you get angry, instead you might get sick to your stomach, so want to select yellow or green to represent that. Or your favorite color might be blue, so you might select that to represent joy. This is your legend for today. And it might even be different on a different day!

Recent Emotions:

Color:

The background of the page is filled with various styles of question marks. Some are simple outlines, some are filled with solid grey, some are filled with a cross-hatch pattern, and some are filled with a scribbled pattern. The question marks are scattered across the entire page, creating a theme of inquiry and confusion.

I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do. For I have the desire to what is good but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do, no the evil I do not want to do this I keep on doing!

Romans 7:15

Excerpt from My Heart Christ's Home By Robert Boyd Munger

We walked next into the living room. This room was rather intimate and comfortable. I liked it. It had a fireplace, overstuffed chairs, a sofa, and a quiet atmosphere. He also seemed pleased with it. He said, "This is indeed a delightful room. Let us come here often. It is secluded and quiet, and we can fellowship together." Well, naturally as a young Christian I was thrilled. I couldn't think of anything I would rather do than have a few minutes with Christ in intimate companionship.

He promised, "I will be here early every morning. Meet me here, and we will start the day together." So morning after morning, I would come downstairs to the living room and He would take a book of the Bible from the bookcase. He would open it and then we would read together. He would tell me of its riches and unfold to me its truths. He would make my heart warm as He revealed His love and His grace He had toward me. These were wonderful hours together. In fact, we called the living room the "withdrawing room." It was a period when we had our quiet time together.

But, little by little, under the pressure of many responsibilities, this time began to be shortened... I thought I was too busy to spend time with Christ. This was not intentional, you understand; it just happened... Finally, not only was the time shortened, but I began to miss a day now and then. It was examination time at the university. Then it was some other urgent emergency. I would miss it two days in a row and often more.

I remember one morning when I was in a hurry, rushing downstairs, eager to be on my way.

As I passed the living room, the door was open. Looking in, I saw a fire in the fireplace and Jesus was sitting there. Suddenly in dismay I thought to myself, "He was my guest. I invited Him into my heart! He has come as Lord of my home. And yet here I am neglecting Him." I turned and went in. With downcast glance, I said, "Blessed Master, forgive me. Have You been here all these mornings?"

"Yes," He said, "I told you I would be here every morning to meet with you." Then I was even more ashamed. He had been faithful in spite of my faithfulness. I asked His forgiveness and He readily forgave me as He does when we are truly repentant.

"The trouble with you is this: you have been thinking of the quiet time, of the Bible study and prayer time, as a factor in your own spiritual progress, but you have forgotten that this hour means something to me also. Remember, I love you. I have redeemed you at great cost. I value your fellowship. Now," He said, "do not neglect this hour if only for my sake. Whatever else may be your desire, remember I want your fellowship!"

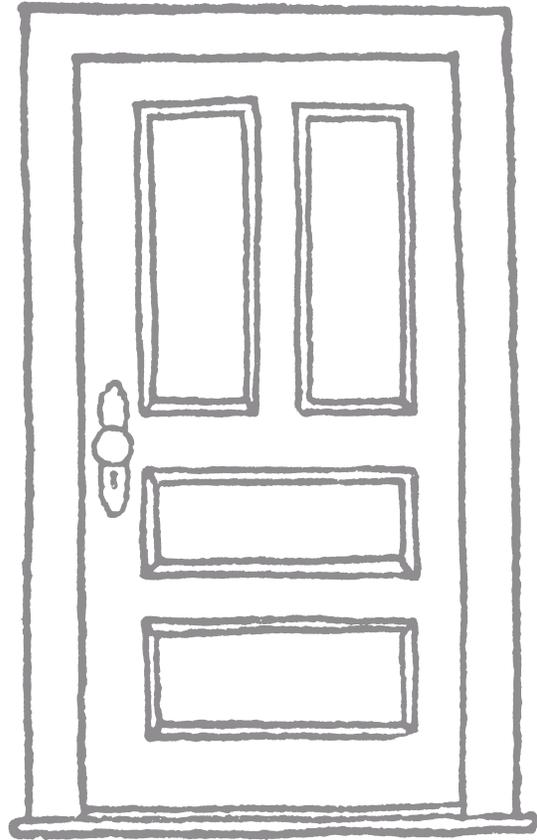
Here I am!

I stand at the door and knock.

If anyone hears my voice
and opens the door,

I will come in and eat with
that person, and they with me.

Revelation 3:20



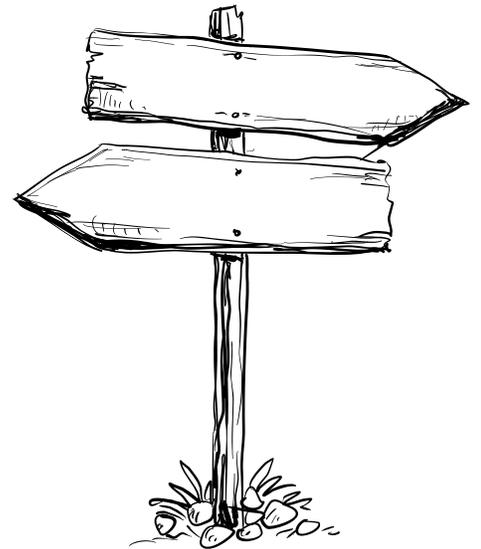


Processing Page

What stood out to you as you
creatively meditated today?

What key thing stood out to you about God?

How does this connect to your life?



What do you sense the Lord inviting you to do in response?

Connecting To Your Life

Hope and Help for Life

Eugene Peterson once said there are two types of people in the world - those who look at the wind blowing through the tree and only see the tree moving and those who realize something unseen is making the tree limbs move. Which type of person do you tend to be? Why? Why not? How might this relate to the struggle to only look to Jesus for life?

How do you keep focused on someone you can't see?

This is where the wheel can help us. Those four spokes (the Word, Prayer, Fellowship, Witnessing) plus obedience (which is really those four spokes lived out in response to Jesus), exist to help us keep our focus on Christ!

What could it look like for you to live aware that Christ is the center of everything? What difference do you think it makes in your life when you live this way?

What, if any, role have the following parts of the wheel illustration played in helping you live aware that Christ is at the center of everything? What specifically has that looked like for you?

The Word -

Prayer -

Fellowship -

Witnessing -

What role has obedience played in helping you experience the abundance of life Jesus paid so dearly to make available to you?

"I am so thankful God forgave me for my sins. When I learned about the promise of forgiveness in 1 John 1:9, I hung onto it tightly.

Satan was right there to make me feel shame, his voice always in my ear. My sin weighed heavy on me and I wanted to be free of the shame and guilt. In 1 John 1:9 I heard that I could start over and I would be purified from all unrighteousness. So I believed and made the decision to walk away from the sin and believe God.

I often think about the woman that was brought before Jesus to be stoned for adultery. It was the law and she could have been stoned. Jesus changed the outcome with a few words to her accusers and stated that he did not condemn her.

Amazing! What a relief!

But then he said one more thing, "Go and sin no more." Why? He obviously didn't want her to be stoned, but I think what he was really saying was, "I want the very best life for you."

Obedience to Christ's commands brings life, true life with true peace. He longed for her to go on the path of righteousness. Not for Him, but for her. So she could see all the wonderful things He had planned for her! Abundant life!"



- Kim Greaves

What have you learned this week about the heart of the wheel illustration?

Processing The Week With Jesus

W = What stood out to you?

Review your Journal Notes from this past week, highlighting key thoughts you want to remember, then recording them below:

H - How has your understanding of God grown as a result of your time spent with Him meditating on His Word?

E = Examen

What did you do this week that moved you closer to Jesus or increased your awareness and enjoyment of Him? What resulted in you feeling farther away from Him or less aware of Him? Why?

E = Explain.

How would you explain to a friend what you sensed the Lord's been teaching you this week? Write a summary below of what you learned this week.

L = Loving God, Loving Others

How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to practically respond to Him and others as a result of your time in His Word this week?



Treasure

What treasure did the Lord bless you with
this week that you don't want to forget?

Record below:

In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.
I will meditate on your precepts and fix my eyes on your ways.
I will delight in your statutes. I will not forget your Word.

Psalm 119:14-16