

HOPE

FREE SAMPLE

A
28
DAY

DEVOTIONAL
EXPERIENCE FOR
STUDENTS

HOPE

Know God

Published by Orange, a division of The reThink Group, Inc.
5870 Charlotte Lane, Suite 300
Cumming, GA 30040 U.S.A.

The Orange logo is a registered trademark of The reThink Group, Inc.

All rights reserved. Except for brief excerpts for review purposes, no part of this book may be reproduced or used in any form without written permission from the publisher.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the *Holy Bible, New International Version*®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan.

Other Orange products are available online and direct from the publisher. Visit our website at www.WhatIsOrange.org for more resources like these.

ISBN: 978-1-941259-74-0

©2016 The reThink Group, Inc.

reThink Conceptual Team:

Ben Crawshaw, Kristen Ivy, Reggie Joiner, Cara Martens, Dan Scott

Lead Writer: Ben Crawshaw

Editing Team: Lauren Makahon, Mike Jeffries, Lauren Terrell, Jennifer Wilder, Sam Collier

Art Direction: Ryan Boon

Project Manager: Nate Brandt

Design: FiveStone

Printed in the United States of America

Second Edition 2016

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

06/01/16

KNOW

GO

DON'T

READ

THIS

BOOK

DON'T READ THIS BOOK.

Wait, wait. That came out wrong. Of course I want you to read it. But don't *just* read this book.

Write in it. Draw on it. Mark it up.

If you've never written in a book, today's a perfect day to start.

If you're not a write-in-your-book kind of person, don't sweat it.

Text yourself instead.

AND

Find someone else to text and talk to about this book.

Think of one person you know who loves God.
Make sure it's someone you feel comfortable talking to.

Your dad? Mentor? Small group leader? Student pastor? Dentist?

You choose.

Okay. Got someone in mind?

Good. Now, I'm going to tell you the most important thing you will do with this book.

TEAR OUT THIS PAGE

and give it to that person.



Because I want them to go on this journey with you. It'll be better than just thinking about these things alone.

What's up?

I just got a journal called *Know God*. I wanted to tell you about it because you seem like you know God. And even though this is a pretty cool book, it won't be able to tell me everything I need to know about knowing God. So when I handed you this page, it was my way of asking you if we can talk through this together.

So . . . can you help me out?

This journal has **short readings** for 28 days. That's four weeks. I'm not sure I'll be able to do every single day, but I'm going to give it my best shot. Do you think you can encourage me stick with it? And if I get off track, can you challenge me to get back on?

Yes? No? Maybe?

One more thing: At the end of each week, can we get together and talk through what I'm learning? I might have some questions. And I believe you'll have some questions for me, too. (That was a hint; there are some questions on the back of this page that might be helpful to ask when we get together.)

I really appreciate your influence in my life. I'm excited about the next four weeks. Thanks for walking through them with me.

Sincerely,

Thanks for hanging out with me for the next four weeks. Any time we get together, feel free to ask me things like: What's the most interesting thing you read this week? Was there something that you had a question about?

But more specifically, here's what I'll be learning. Let's start by talking about this:

WEEK ONE

This week I discovered that in order to know God, I need to **HEAR** from God.

I LEARNED THAT:

- » Creation points to the Creator.
- » Jesus' words reveal God's heart.
- » The Bible is God's Word.
- » The Bible gives our lives direction.
- » Reading the Bible is a good habit.
- » Memorizing Scripture changes us.
- » The Holy Spirit is God's stamp of ownership.

When we get together this week, ask me if I have a plan for reading God's Word. Maybe we could even come up with one together.

WEEK THREE

This week I discovered that in order to know God, I need to **TALK** about God.

I LEARNED THAT:

- » We all need support from good friends.
- » I should talk about who Jesus is.
- » I can cheer on others in their faith.
- » God reveals Himself through our questions.
- » Remembering what God has done builds our faith.
- » I don't have to know everything in order to share what I do know.
- » I am created to be a light in the dark.

When we get together this week, ask me when—and with whom—I am talking about my relationship with God (other than "right now" and "with you").

WEEK TWO

This week I discovered that in order to know God, I need to **PRAY** to God.

I LEARNED THAT:

- » Prayer helps us get to know God.
- » God loves authentic prayers.
- » Prayer reminds us who God is.
- » God moves when we ask Him to take the lead.
- » Prayer reminds us that we need God.
- » God forgave us so we should forgive others.
- » I have access to God—any time, any place.

When we get together this week, ask me about my prayers. Maybe you could even share one thing you have discovered about prayer in your own life.

WEEK FOUR

This week I discovered that in order to know God, I need to **LIVE** a life that honors God.

I LEARNED THAT:

- » God is worth our worship.
- » God's love is free.
- » God loves it when we give generously.
- » The way to find my life is to give it away.
- » My work is an act of worship.
- » When I trust God, I will rest.
- » I should start with love.

When we get together this week, ask me how I am worshipping God in the way I live. Maybe we can think of some new ways we could both give, serve, and love others.

**KNOWING GOD IS A
LOT LIKE KNOWING ANYONE
ELSE—YOU CAN LEARN A
LOT ABOUT THEM, BUT THEY
STILL SURPRISE YOU EVERY
NOW AND THEN.**

HOW DO I KNOW GOD?

Knowing God doesn't happen in a moment. It's not like you wake up one morning and *BAM*, you know God. You have Him all figured out—everything there is to know. No more questions or doubts.

It doesn't work like that.

In fact, I bet if you talked to people who believe in God and have known Him for a long time, 100% of them would tell you they're still discovering new things about Him. They still have questions. God is still mysterious to them.

Go ahead. Ask them. See what they say.

Knowing God is a lot like knowing anyone else—
You can learn a lot about them, but they still surprise you every now and then. They aren't puzzles to be solved. Or textbooks to be read.
They're *people* to hang out with.

Knowing God is the same way.
Knowing God is about a RELATIONSHIP.

You can read every word in this book, fill in every blank, follow every suggestion, and still not understand all there is to know about God.

And that's okay. Because this book isn't about knowing everything there is to

know about God. It's about a journey. A journey where you will . . .

Learn new things.

Unlearn what you thought you knew.

Connect with a God who already loves you more than you will ever **know**.

But before you go any further—

Before you even turn to the next page—

There is one thing you absolutely must know about knowing God:

If you want to know God, start with Jesus.

I realize that's a pretty predictable thing to say. But really, Jesus is the place to start. Why? Well, because Jesus *is* God. But Jesus was also a Man.

He was born.

He had a mother.

She gave Him chores and a curfew. (I have no idea if He had a curfew.)

He had birthdays. I don't know how He celebrated them, but He had them.

He . . .

. . . ate.

. . . slept.

. . . got thirsty.

. . . sneezed.

I could go on and on.

Jesus was literally God walking around on earth like you and me. So what Jesus *said*—yeah, those are God's words. And what He *did*—well, that should give us a pretty good idea of what God is like.

So, if you really want to know God, get to know Jesus.

HOW DO I KNOW JESUS?

I guess that's the next logical question, right? I mean, Jesus isn't exactly sending you texts, retweeting you, or sharing pics on Instagram. Although, if He did, that would make for an awesome story.

So how do we get to know Him?

If you want to know Jesus, read His Story.

Jesus' story is the Bible. Maybe you have a Bible that your grandma gave you seven years ago. Or maybe you have a fancy app that lets you search funny verses about donkeys. But let's be honest—other than settling an argument or answering a question at church, how much have you interacted with the Bible?

You may not know this, but the Bible is not a book. I thought it was a book for most of my life. I mean, it looks like a book. You can flip through it like a book. You can download it like a book.

But it's really not one book. It's 66 books
written by 40 authors
over 1,600 years.

And it all comes together to tell ONE STORY.

It's not just any story. It's a story about:
 A really big God who loved sinful people SO MUCH
 He became a human.

Jesus.

And Jesus
 lived,
 died,
 and rose again
 so we could be forgiven and live with Him forever.

This is the story that helps us know Jesus.

This is the story that gives us a background for everything we know about God.

👉 **HERE ARE A
 FEW THINGS WE
 KNOW ABOUT
 GOD BECAUSE OF
 HIS STORY:**

- » We know God is good because He created a perfect world.
- » We know bad things will happen because when people went against God, the world became broken.
- » We know God won't abandon us because we see how He pursued sinful and disobedient people for thousands of years.
- » We know we can trust God to keep His promises because He already kept His greatest promise by sending His Son.
- » We know we can be forgiven because Jesus died for us and already took on all the punishment for our sin.
- » We know that one day we can live with God in Heaven because Jesus defeated death once and for all.
- » We know that until we see God face-to-face, we are called to live a life that is characterized by love because that's what Jesus taught.

THE BIG IDEA.

Are you tracking with me so far? Let's review.

You want to know God? Great!

Start by getting to know Jesus.

The best way to know Jesus is to read His story—the Bible. Specifically, the part where He shows up on the scene.

In other words, start by reading the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John).

Four different accounts written by four different men.

All about what Jesus said and did.

But even before you read the Gospels, you might be interested to know there is one thing Jesus *did* that is more important than anything else.

You can probably guess what it is. He died for the sins of the world, and after three days, He rose from the dead—not like some-zombie-in-a-video-game alive again, but like walking-around-eating-breakfast-with-His-friends alive again.

Jesus died. He rose to life again. He's alive. And that's the most important thing He did.

But there was also something **important** that Jesus *said*.

Okay, *everything* He said was **important**. *Really important*.

But there was one thing He said that was more important than anything else.

Not according to me. According to Him.

Of all the things Jesus said, this one thing is the key to understanding everything you'll ever know about God.

Jesus said this one thing on a day when a group of religious leaders—men who had spent their entire lives studying God—approached Him. One of them asked Him this question:

“Teacher, what is the most important commandment in the law?”

Check out what Jesus said:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22: 37-40).

That’s it.

The most important commandment.

The biggest idea.

Everything else that the Bible teaches comes back to this.

If you start to understand these 48 words now, you can worry about the other hundreds of thousands of words in the Bible later.

Because really, it’s pretty simple.

The most important thing you could ever do is **LOVE GOD**.

And if you aren’t sure how to love God, a good way to start is by loving the people He loves:

God loves *you*.

And God loves *others*.

You can know for sure that God loves *you* because He created you. And He cared enough about you to show up on this planet to die for you so you can be forgiven and be with Him forever.

And you can know for certain that God loves *others* because, guess what, He created them and died for them, too. All of them. The people you’d give your last stick of gum to and the people who make you want to move to the South Pole.

It's like Jesus summed up everything you need to know by saying: *It's about three relationships: God. You. Others.*

OR IF YOU WANT TO MAKE IT MORE SIMPLE, IT'S ABOUT ONE IDEA:

LOVE.

Love God.

See yourself the way He sees you **amazing** love.

Love others the way He loves them.

That's where Jesus started. So as you begin this journey, I think it makes sense for you to start there, too.

TO SUM IT ALL UP

1

When you get to know **GOD'S STORY** it helps you understand your own story. (You know more about yourself because you understand more about the One who made you).

2

Then as you understand **YOUR STORY** it helps you see how you're connected to the stories of others.

3

So, the way to begin living out **OUR STORY** is to love others the way that God loves them.

SEE HOW THAT WORKS?

4 WAYS TO KNOW GOD

EVEN THOUGH THERE'S NO FORMULA FOR KNOWING EVERYTHING ABOUT GOD, THERE ARE A FEW THINGS YOU CAN DO EVERY DAY THAT WILL HELP YOU KNOW HIM BETTER.

HEAR

If you want to know someone, what's one of the first things you do? You listen. Guys, good luck getting a girl to agree to a 2nd date if you don't listen to what she says. Girls, if you're dating a guy who never listens to you, stop! Why is listening so important? Because *that other person* is the only one who can tell you what he or she is thinking and feeling, and what makes him or her laugh or get angry. The same is true for God. If you want to know God, you have to learn how to listen. And when you get in the habit of hearing from Him, it helps you *trust* Him more.

PRAY

Have you ever been in a relationship where the other person did ALL the talking? That's weird, right? God thinks so, too. He doesn't want a relationship with you where He's the only one talking. Sure, He has moments where He just wants you to be quiet and listen. But for the most part, He wants you to talk back. He wants to hear from you—your frustrations, worries, fears, dreams, requests, and interests. So if you want to know God, get in the habit of talking with Him. Because when you pray, it *connects* you with God.

THAT'S WHAT THIS JOURNAL IS ALL ABOUT—FOUR THINGS THAT YOU CAN DO TODAY (AND EVERY DAY) THAT WILL HELP YOU **KNOW GOD**.

TALK LIVE

Who is your closest friend? Do you talk about that person when he's not around? Sure you do. Not in a bad, trash-talking kind of way. In a good way. You talk about the back flip he did off a brick wall. You talk about the hilarious joke he told. You talk about where you hung out this weekend. In fact, you probably hang out with people who also like hanging out with your friend. The same is true with God. As you get to know Him, you'll find that you want to talk about Him more. You want to be around other people who talk about Him. And when you talk about Him—and listen to others talk about Him—it helps you see Him in new ways.

Have you ever had someone give you a gift or do something for you that was ridiculously nice? Like, so unbelievably amazing that you just *had* to find a way to thank them? The same is true with God. As you get to know God more, you will discover more and more about how awesome He is. Don't be surprised if you find yourself wanting to say *thank you* in your own unique way. Maybe you'll respond by singing, jumping up and down, silently thinking about Him, painting a picture, serving the homeless, or volunteering to help kids at your church. Regardless of how you do it, the more time you spend with God, the more you will want to respond to His greatness by *honoring* God with your life.

WEEK 1

HEAR

HEAR

If you want to know God, the first thing you want to do is hear from Him. But how do you hear from Someone who isn't likely to . . .

- . . . walk onto your school campus.
- . . . sit next to you at lunch.
- . . . send you a text.
- . . . or hang out with you on a Friday night?

How can you hear from Someone if you can't even see Him? Actually, the Bible gives us a pretty good clue. It says this:

“No one has ever seen God, but God the One and Only, who is at the Father’s side, has made him known” (John 1:18).

The One and Only who is at the Father's side. That's Jesus. There it is again— this idea that **if you want to know God, get to know Jesus**. Jesus is the best way to know God because Jesus walked around on this planet and *showed us what God is like*. He's not physically here now, but He was here. And while He was here, He spent a lot of time with 12 guys who are sometimes called *disciples* and sometimes called *apostles*. Call them whatever you want. The point is, they got to know Jesus pretty well.

They were there when Jesus taught.
They were there when Jesus did some incredible miracles.
They were there when Jesus died,
And all of them (except Judas) were there to see Him alive once again after He rose from the dead.

They were also around when Jesus ascended into Heaven after rising from the dead. Meaning, one minute He's chillin' on a hill outside Jerusalem, and the next minute He's floating up into the sky until He disappears. (At least, that's how I picture it in my head.) Check out Acts 1 to see for yourself.

So why does it matter that these guys witnessed so much of Jesus' life and ministry? And what does that have to do with hearing from God? A lot.

Right before Jesus ascended, He gave them the most important mission: Go. Tell people what you've seen and heard.

"You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

And guess what? They did.

They went. They told. Some of them even wrote about it.

Two of Jesus' disciples wrote down everything they knew about Him. Think about it—these guys knew Jesus. He was their friend, wingman, bro, amigo, bff (okay, I'll stop now). When they wrote about Jesus, they were writing about Someone they had traveled with, eaten with, camped with, and hung out with. They had seen Him in action.

They wrote about His birth. They wrote about how His ministry got started. They put down on paper everything they could remember about what He did and said. You might recognize their names: Matthew and John.

Then there were Mark and Luke. Mark and Luke weren't in the group of 12 guys who hung out with Jesus, but they knew some of those guys. Mark was friends with Peter, and Luke interviewed just about everybody who had an experience with Jesus. And these two guys also wrote about Jesus based on eyewitness accounts.

Today you can still read the words of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. They're the first four books of the New Testament. We call them the Gospels, and each one gives us an interesting point of view on the life of Jesus.

If you want to know God, read His story. Think about who He is and what He says. Hearing from God in this way will help you trust Him

So here's one thing to think about as you start this week:
If you want to Know God, remember His words.

HEAR

DAY 1

Did you know that 45,000 thunderstorms occur every day? Sounds almost impossible, right? It also makes me want to take a nap. Because what's better than a nap during a thunderstorm? No, seriously. What's better?

Wait! Wake up! No napping—even if there is a thunderstorm where you are. And listen to this: According to the space agency NASA, you'd have to explode *100 billion tons* of dynamite *every second* to match the energy produced by the sun. That's insane to think about!

Whether it's clouds, rain, lightning, stars, the sun, the moon, or the expanse of the sky, if you go outside and look *up*, there's a lot going on. But very few of us—myself included—spend much time looking that direction. (Probably because I'm looking down at my phone too much.)

King David, one of the most famous kings of Israel, wrote about *looking up* as a way to know God. There's a book in the Old Testament called *Psalms*, which means *praise songs*. David wrote several songs. And although you won't hear one of David's psalms on Spotify or iTunes, you can still appreciate it as good music. Check out this lyric:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands” (Psalm 19:1).

🔍 WHAT DO YOU THINK THIS VERSE MEANS?

.....

.....

.....

Nature *declares* and *proclaims*. **Creation points to the Creator.** Nature says something. It makes an announcement. The question is, do we hear what nature is saying?

HEAR

David believed nature made statements about God. Statements like:

*God is an astounding Creator.
God's creativity is unending.
The beauty around us reflects God's glory. (Glory = Honor + Awe)*

Jesus had a similar thought:

“Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?” (Matthew 6:26).

Jesus urges us to open our eyes to what’s around us. Because by paying attention to *creation*, we can better understand our *Creator*. Even more, we can catch a glimpse of the great love our Creator has for us.

With that in mind, here’s a two-part challenge for today:

- 1. Look around.** Go outside. Take a walk. Pay attention to creation. Ask yourself, what does *this* say about its Creator?
- 2. Say thanks.** Tell God you appreciate His work. Maybe something like this: *God, thank You for the creativity You put into nature. I know that all creation points back to You. So in seeing this, I appreciate You more.*

Nature makes an announcement about God. The question is *are we listening?* It’s time for us to hear God and know God.

🕒 AFTER SPENDING SOME TIME OUTSIDE, WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT GOD?

.....

.....

.....

HEAR

DAY 2

Before Jesus became famous for being, well, Jesus, He had a job. And I'm not talking about being Savior of the world—though He was certainly that. But for a period of time, Jesus had an actual trade job.

Now there's a lot of conversations about exactly which job He had. From what I've seen, the argument comes down to four professional titles that Jesus possibly held:

1. Carpenter
2. Mason
3. Engineer
4. Handyman

So which is the correct answer? I have no idea. But one thing we can be sure of is that Jesus was in the construction business—which makes sense because he told a story about building a house.

But before we get to that story, consider what it means to follow God. Does your mind immediately go to *rules*? You know, all the stuff you should and shouldn't do? All the people you should avoid hanging out with? Or maybe the ones you should be nice to, forgive, encourage, help and love?

🕒 TAKE A MINUTE TO NAME SOME THINGS YOU THINK GOD WANTS YOU TO DO OR NOT DO:

.....

.....

.....

HEAR

Here's another question: Why *should* you do (or not do) these things? With Jesus' experience with construction on your mind, listen to this excerpt. It will help us answer that question:

"Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. . . . But everyone who hears these words of mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand" (Matthew 7:24, 26).

Jesus goes on to say that a storm came. The house on the rock took it like a champ. The house on the sand? Crumbled. Destroyed. Woodpile for a bonfire or a fireplace.

Jesus' story tells us:

- 1. What we should do.** He makes it as obvious as possible—build your life on Jesus' words. Put them into practice.
- 2. Why we should do it.** Not just because our parents, pastors or church leaders say so, but because it's smart. This isn't about a list of rules—this is about building something that won't break.

Jesus' words reveal God's heart. When you study the words of Jesus, it will help you know God more. But Jesus' words won't really do much until you apply them. When the storms come, you'll be happy you built your homes (lives) on the rock (Jesus' words). It won't keep the storms from happening, but it will make us better prepared to handle them.

🔗 WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BUILD YOUR LIFE ON? HOW DO YOU PLAN ON DOING THAT?

.....

.....

.....

HEAR

DAY 3

Do you yawn a lot? (Are you yawning right now?) Although there are lots of thoughts about *why* we yawn, none of them have been proven. The ancient Greeks believed that yawning was a person's soul trying to escape his or her body. If that's the case, my soul has probably made it to the other side of the world and back by now.

Another theory is that *boredom* is the cause. If I'm having a conversation with someone and he starts yawning, I assume he'd rather be reading the iTunes' terms of service agreement.

If boredom is, in fact, the cause of yawning, let me ask you a question: Does the idea of reading the Bible automatically make you yawn? I've had conversations with students who think they *should* read the Bible, but they don't because it's boring. Or old. Or hard to understand.

I'll be honest, there are some parts of the Bible that are less than riveting—like instructions on burnt offerings or measurements of the temple. I just typed the names of those things and yawned. Twice.

🗣️ TALK ABOUT YOUR HISTORY WITH THE BIBLE. HAVE YOU READ IT A LOT? A LITTLE? NEVER? WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE BIBLE?

.....

.....

.....

Here's another question: Do you think the Bible is relevant to your life *right now*? Do you believe it has something to say about your family, friends, dating life, grades, etc.?

In the New Testament, there is a letter written by Paul to one of his best friends, Timothy. And in that letter, Paul talks about the idea of Scripture being *alive*:

“All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Paul makes two definitive statements in this verse:

- 1. All Scripture is God-breathed.** It is inspired by God. It’s not just words *about* God—the Bible *is* God’s words.
- 2. All Scripture is useful.** The Bible helps us *know* what is right. But it also helps us *do* what is right. That’s the payoff—that we may be prepared to follow God’s words.

Now, that doesn’t mean that you’ll never be bored reading the Bible. And it certainly doesn’t mean you’ll understand it all. But you can trust that **the Bible is God’s Word**. For you. And those words are *alive*. If you want to know God, listen to His words in the Bible.

HEAR

DAY 4

Can you imagine driving a car at night without turning the headlights on? Maybe that sounds cool to you because you're into life-threatening experiences that are likely to get your car totaled. But to me? That sounds like a nightmare.

It's true: things are just easier when they're done in the light. Do ever feel like you're navigating *life* in the dark? You're not sure which way you're supposed to go? You have situations where you wish the answers were clearer?

🔍 **WHAT ARE SOME AREAS IN YOUR LIFE WHERE MAYBE YOU FEEL LIKE YOU'RE DRIVING IN THE DARK AND YOU WISH YOU COULD GET A LITTLE LIGHT?**

.....

.....

.....

The Bible tells us what "light" we need to illuminate the dark areas of life:

"Your word is a lamp to my feet a light for my path"
(Psalm 119:105).

If you were hiking on a trail at night and wanted to avoid falling off a cliff, you would hold up a light. Why? So you knew where you were supposed to go. That's what the Bible does—it gives us information so we can see clearly. In other words, **the Bible gives our lives direction.**

Psalm 119 is the longest chapter in the Bible and it's all about God's Word. In fact, the author of the psalm refers to God's Word in almost all 176 verses. And the entire chapter is about how God's

words help us stay on track with what God wants for us. The goal of the chapter? That we would know God better as we allow His words to guide our lives.

👉 **IF YOU WANT TO START READING YOUR BIBLE, BUT YOU AREN'T SURE HOW TO BEGIN, HERE ARE TWO SUGGESTIONS:**

- 1. Find a good starting place in your Bible.** Don't play Bible Roulette, where you close your eyes and randomly open your Bible to read it. You wouldn't read a normal book like that (or you shouldn't, anyway). Start at the beginning of a book. Here are some good ones to try:

John
Mark
Proverbs
Psalms
Philippians

- 2. Have a reading goal.** Growing up, my dad used to tell me, "You don't have to understand *everything*. Just read until you understand *something*." I still put that into practice today. I read until I bump into something that I can relate to. Here are some questions that help me:

What does this passage say?
What does this passage tell me about God?
How does this passage apply to me right now?

When the Bible begins to light up your life, it's exciting! Not only do you begin to know God better, you begin to trust Him more because you see how His words give your life direction.

HEAR

DAY 5

Do you have any habits? Do you crack your knuckles? Twirl your hair? Smack your gum? Check your phone every 1.3 seconds? You may need to ask someone who knows you well what your habits are. They may be so habitual that you don't even realize you have them!

The thing about habits is that *bad* ones are a lot easier to establish than *good* ones.

👉 **NAME TWO HABITS THAT YOU HAVE THAT YOU'VE FORMED WITHOUT REALLY THINKING ABOUT THEM. (IN OTHER WORDS, NO ONE TOLD YOU TO DO IT; YOU DIDN'T WAKE UP AND DECIDE ONE DAY YOU WERE GOING TO DO IT.)**

.....

👉 **NAME ONE HABIT THAT YOU HAVE THAT'S ON PURPOSE.**

.....

Reading the Bible is a good habit. Why? To answer that question, I'll throw an old saying at you: "First you make your habits, then your habits make you." In other words, reading the Bible will influence who you become.

There are a number of reasons why people don't make reading their Bible a habit:

- » They don't have time.
- » They're not good at it (meaning they don't know where to start, or they don't understand what they read).
- » They don't feel like it.

I'm not so sure I'd call those *reasons*. I'd call them *excuses*. But what if you quit making excuses?

HEAR

Just like studying, exercising, saving, or practicing, when you read your Bible regularly, you get something in return. The author of Psalm 1 says it this way:

“Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked. . . . But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water which yields its fruit in season” (Psalm 1:1-3).

👉 WHAT IS THE MAIN POINT OF THIS PASSAGE?

.....
.....
.....

👉 HOW DOES THIS PASSAGE APPLY TO YOU RIGHT NOW?

.....
.....
.....

“Like a tree planted by streams of water,” when you’re constantly drinking in God’s Word, your character is always being changed for the better—you’re always bearing fruit at the right time.

This passage isn’t referring to people who only read the Bible when they’re in trouble or faced with a desperate decision, it’s talking about people who make it a lifestyle—who have a long-term goal of knowing God.

Why don’t you try it?

1. Pick a consistent time.
2. Pick a consistent place.
3. Make it a habit by committing to 90 days.

HEAR

DAY 6

The human brain is an amazing organ. In fact, the brain's memory storage space measures around 2.5 petabytes (or a million gigabytes)! That means your brain can hold more data than 15,500 iPhones. Think of it this way: If your brain worked like a digital video recorder in a television, 2.5 petabytes would be enough to hold three million hours worth of television shows. You'd have to leave the television running continuously for more than 300 years to use up all that storage. I want to see a DVR do that!

🔗 KNOWING THIS, WHY DO YOU THINK IT'S SO CHALLENGING FOR US TO MEMORIZE SCRIPTURE?

.....

.....

.....

Today I want to challenge you to put that awesome brain to work and replace just a few of those JT lyrics with some Scripture.

You may ask, "But why is it important to memorize Scripture? It's right there in the Bible to read, so why waste precious brain space committing it to memory?" Listen to this:

"I seek you with all my heart; do not let me stray from your commands. I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you" (Psalm 119:10-11).

Memorizing Scripture changes us. It transforms our minds. When you have God's words in your brain, you literally hear from God more often. Your thoughts are more focused towards God. And as a result, you'll start to know Him better.

HEAR

Do you know the Pledge of Allegiance?
Do you know your phone number, address and social security number?
Do you know the lyrics to at least one Taylor Swift song?
(Guys, be honest!)

You know these things through repetition. A thought is a physical pathway in the brain. The more you have that thought, the more you groove that path into your mind, and the easier it is to have that thought again. Memorizing Scripture takes work. It takes repetition. But it's possible for every single person who has a brain. (That means you!)

I've given you a whole list of great verses for you to memorize—you'll see it later. But for today, I want you to practice by memorizing *half* of the verse we studied:

"I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you."

There. You've seen it. Don't let your smart phone be smarter than you. Memorize some Scripture and see what happens.

HEAR

DAY 7

According to *ehow.com*, there are six ways to know if you've seen a ghost. Two of those methods include testing electronic appliances and observing the behavior of wild animals in the area. I could probably figure out how to test my appliances. But recording the behavior of wild animals? That sounds scarier than seeing a ghost.

If you're the kind of person who finds ghosts interesting, you should read the Bible. Check this out: When Jesus soared into the sky after coming back from the dead, He sent His Holy Ghost to us. Question: *Do you still think the Bible is boring?* Because that's straight-up mind-blowing (and, I'll admit, a little freaky) to think about.

Have you ever heard the term "Trinity"? It refers to the three distinct Persons of God:

1. **God the Father.** He's the Creator of the whole universe. He created the earth and everything in it. When sin entered the world through Adam and Eve's disobedience to Him, God sent a solution to save His creation. He sent:
2. **God the Son.** Jesus. Jesus lived a perfect life, died, and was later resurrected. But when Jesus ascended into heaven, He sent a Helper to those who believed in Him. He sent:
3. **God the Holy Spirit.** This is who we're talking about today. I grew up hearing Him referred to as the "Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit is God's presence who lives in followers of Jesus.

👉 **LOTS OF CHRISTIANS THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE DEBATED ABOUT HOW TO DISCUSS OR MAKE SENSE OF THE TRINITY. ONE GOD, BUT THREE PERSONS. WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A SHOT AT IT? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE TRINITY?**

.....

.....

.....

In 2 Corinthians, the Apostle Paul says this of the Holy Spirit:

“[He] put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come” (2 Corinthians 1:22).

“He” is God.

“Our” includes anyone who believes in Him.

Paul is saying that anyone who believes in God has God’s Holy Spirit in their hearts. God’s Holy Spirit in us is His way of promising: *“You will be Mine forever. Your life will go up and down. You will have good days and bad. But My Spirit in you is the promise I am always here to help you.”*

Weirded out, yet? Totally confused? That’s okay. You don’t have to understand the Trinity or even the Holy Spirit to experience God’s presence. Just start here: **The Holy Spirit is God’s stamp of ownership.**

And when you are reading God’s Word and tuned in to His Spirit in your life, you will begin to hear from God in new and exciting ways.

Spend a few minutes praying. Ask God to speak to you through His Spirit. Ask for His Holy Spirit to give you strength in any struggle you are currently facing.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD . . .
REMEMBER HIS WORDS.

🕒 **THERE ARE LOTS OF VERSES IN THE BIBLE THAT ARE WORTH REMEMBERING. HERE ARE A FEW TO GET YOU STARTED:**

**"We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."
(EPHESIANS 2:10)**

**"Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."
(PROVERBS 3:5-6)**

**"Neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
(ROMANS 8:39)**

**"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."
(JOHN 3:16)**

**"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!"
(2 CORINTHIANS 5:17)**

**"Do not conform any longer 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)**

**"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness."
(1 JOHN 1:9)**

KNOW GOD: A 28-DAY DEVOTIONAL EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS

HOW DO YOU KNOW GOD?

Knowing God doesn't happen in a moment. It's not like you wake up one morning and *BAM*, you know God. You have Him all figured out. No more questions. No more doubts.

In fact, you can read every word in this book, fill in every blank, follow every suggestion, and still not understand everything there is to know about God. But that shouldn't discourage you. Because this book isn't about answering all of your questions. It's about taking a step—starting you on a journey to help you know God *more*. Not *completely*. Not *fully*. But more than you did yesterday or the day before. Because even though there's no formula for knowing everything about God, there are a few things you can do every day that will help you know Him better.

That's what this journal is all about—four things you can do today (and every day) that will help you know God.

HEAR

PRAY

TALK

LIVE

\$16.99



orange

©2016 The reThink Group, Inc.
All rights reserved.

WWW.THINKORANGE.COM

ISBN-13: 978-1-941259-74-0



9 781941 259740