

CAPTIVATE CHURCH

THE ECHO OF ENCOUNTER



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THE ECHO OF **ENCOUNTER**



What happens after we encounter God?

We don't always stop to ask the question.

Instead, with no thought for tomorrow, we conclude that this must be the end. "I've made it to my destination!", we confidently boast until we realize, much to our dismay, that there is an entire life's journey ahead of us. And so we frantically search for the next encounter, the next mountaintop, and it's in that quest that we discover—often the hard way—that the mountaintop wasn't a destination as much as it was a place to be strengthened for the journey.

Because life isn't lived on the mountaintop, just like Christianity isn't lived in the encounter. It's lived in the reverberations of it.

It's lived in the aftermath. It's lived in what it means to us. It's lived in the ways it shapes our thinking and our approach to life. It's lived in the way that it strengthens us to face what life will bring. It's lived not in the absence of trial or circumstances but rather in peace that's found while in it. It's an encounter that reverberates through all of life.

The next seven weeks are meant to show us how God uses those encounters to shape and renew and transform every area of our lives.

This is the echo of encounter.



WEEK

FAMILY

SERMON NOTES

DAY 1

"When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." Mark 2:5 NIV

One of the most beautiful aspects of family is that we lift each other up. In our weakness we are made strength through the faith of those around us. Likewise, we give our faith to those in need.

List three people in your community that are in need of your faith. How can you be praying for them?

List three people who you lean on in times of weakness. In what ways can you ask them to pray for you?

DAY 2

"Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on." Mark 2:3-4 NIV

We all have a mat. Our mats represent our brokenness. Families, like these four friends, see brokenness as an opportunity to gain intimacy with Jesus and each other.

How does sharing our weakness with those around us bring us into deeper fellowship?

What's one thing you know you need to share with someone in your community this week?

DAY 3

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart..." Jeremiah 1:5 NIV

One mark of a vibrant family is cultivating each other's calling. God has set each one of us apart for a specific mission. As a family, we work to point each other towards our purpose.

Who could you speak an encouragement to this week? What gifts can you affirm in their life?

Who can you ask to speak into the gifts in your own life?

DAY 4

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs." 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 NIV

Some family members are easy to love; some are not. And yet, as unlovable as we were, Christ chose to love us wholeheartedly- by giving His life so that we might find our way back to the Father.

What makes loving people so difficult at times? Do past experiences dictate how you love someone?

How can Christ's love influence ours?

DAY 5

"Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times."

Matthew 18:21-22 NIV

There is freedom in forgiveness. We will find a deeper connection as a family when we choose to forgive. Jesus uses this particular response to underscore the fact that our forgiveness should aim to be boundless.

Is there someone in your life that you haven't forgiven? Why?

What steps can you take this week towards fully forgiving that person?

DAY 6

"We love because he first loved us." 1 John 4:19 NIV

God is the author and originator of true, complete, and perfect love. This love sets a standard that we, as followers of Christ, should attempt to reach on a daily basis.

List some attributes of God's love for you.

Choose a couple of these to focus on this week as you love those around you.

DAY 7

"He and all his family were devout and God-fearing; he gave generously to those in need and prayed to God regularly." Acts 10:2 NIV

Enjoy memorizing and meditating on this verse today.

You can also use this day to catch up on any reading from this week.

CREATIVE PRACTICE

"Family Game Night"

Turn off all electronics, pick your favorite board game, grab your favorite dessert, and enjoy an unplugged night with the family.



2

TIME

WEEK

SERMON NOTES

DAY 1

"Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom."
Psalm 90:12 NIV

Time is our only non-renewable resource. What we do with it matters.
How we spend our time should reflect the values we hold.

What do you value most?

What takes up the most of your time?

DAY 2

"Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and he will establish your plans."
Proverbs 16:3 NIV

Often our life can be lived by default, rather than by design. Days pass and we wonder, "How did we end up here?"

Take a look at your calendar. What does it say that you value?

What do you need to give more time to? What can you afford to spend less time on?

DAY 3

"The heart of a man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps."
Proverbs 16:9 NIV

God gives us the freedom to plan our way. However, it's in the discipline of spending time with Him that we make space for God to show up in the rest of our lives.

Choose a spiritual discipline to include in your schedule for the next week (i.e. prayer, worship, Scripture reading, sitting in silence). What impact do you expect this to have?

Come back to this page throughout the week and note the ways you've experienced God move.

DAY 4

"My times are in Your hands..." Psalm 31:15 NIV

Our God is the god of every moment. This part of His nature is revealed through a steady prayer life. It's through prayer that we invite God into all aspects of our lives, and find a deeper understanding of His love for us.

What is your prayer life like? Do you find yourself praying in all moments or certain moments?

Jesus, even as the Son of God, constantly made time to spend with the Father. How can His example shape our prayer life today?

DAY 5

...You do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes." James 4:14
ESV

In just three years of ministry work, Jesus accomplished the greatest rescue mission the world has ever seen. His fixed focus on each moment paved the way for His life's work.

What is God calling into focus in your own life?

In what ways can you incorporate God's mission- to build His Kingdom-into your daily rhythms?

DAY 6

"For the Son of Man came to seek and save the lost." Luke 19:10 NIV

Jesus' whole life was tied to His calling-to seek and save the lost. His hope for us is that we would live lives marked by prioritizing our calling.

Our purpose is always tied to people. Write down three people God's calling you to give your time to.

What ways can you invest in them this week (i.e. prayer, sharing a meal, phone call)?

DAY 7

Grace Day

"The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever." 1 John 2:17 NIV

Enjoy memorizing and meditating on this verse today.

You can also use this day to catch up on any reading from this week.

CREATIVE PRACTICE

“Solitude Day”

Often God is quiet because life is loud. Find the most beautiful place you can. Spend four hours with God. Sit in silence. Listen. Journal. Pray.

Think over these questions:

What’s different about this atmosphere than the one I normally live in?

What is God saying?

What’s next?

A black and white photograph of a desert landscape. In the foreground, there is a sandy, cracked ground with a few small, dark, scrubby bushes. The middle ground shows a flat, sandy area with more sparse vegetation. In the background, there are large, rugged mountains with visible geological formations. The sky is clear with a few wispy clouds.

WEEK 3

WORK

SERMON NOTES

DAY 1

"The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it." Genesis 2:15 NLT

God created us to work, and that's really good news. Often, going to work isn't our favorite activity. But the work God saved for us to do brings life and joy to the world around us as we help make an invisible God visible.

Write some initial thoughts and feelings to the idea, "I was made to work."

Why do you believe most people are not passionate about their work?

DAY 2

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart: I appointed you as a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah 1:5
NIV

The truth is God created us for a very specific work. And we know this because it is often the things that keeps us up at night, dreaming about it. Discovering what this is, is the key to living a life full of purpose.

What is the one dream that has kept you up at night the most?

What are three obstacles that stand in the way of living out this dream, or taking it to the next level?

DAY 3

"The world and its desires pass away, but whoever does the will of God lives forever." 1 John 2:17 NIV

We give way too much of our life to ambitions that will not matter in the end. Nobody wants to get to the end of their career and wonder what it all meant.

What's one ambition that you give too much of your time to?

What do you want to have accomplished at the end of your career?

DAY 4

"At daybreak, Jesus went out to a solitary place. The people were looking for him and when they came to where he was, they tried to keep him from leaving them. But he said, I must proclaim the good news of the Kingdom of God to the other towns also..." Luke 4:42-43 NIV

The reason we do not always accomplish as much in life as we hope to, is we do not have as narrow of a focus as Jesus had. The greatest deterrent to great things, are good things.

What are some good' things that take your focus off your main goal?

List three great goals for your life for this next year.

DAY 5

"On the day the Lord gave the Amorites over to Israel, Joshua asked the Lord in the presence of Israel; ' Sun, stand still over Gibeon, and you, moon, over the Valley of Aijalon.'" Joshua 10:12 NIV

Prayers that are never asked are never answered. The size of your ask, reveals the size of your God.

What's your biggest ask of God in this season?

What keeps you from asking God for big things?

DAY 6

"Go home to your own people and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you?" Mark 5:19 NIV

We do not need to look any farther for our purpose than the people in our everyday life. The evidence of our purpose is all around us; in the people that God has surrounded us with.

Write down five people around your life that you believe God has put there for a reason.

Are any of these people far from God?

DAY 7

"For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:10 NIV

Enjoy memorizing and meditating on this verse today.

You can also use this day to catch up on any reading from this week.

CREATIVE PRACTICE

"What Makes You Tick?"

Take an hour to discover your purpose by analyzing these three categories in your life. Find what makes you tick.

Ability: What are you good at? What are your strengths? What have people affirmed?

Affinity: What do you enjoy? What are your passions? What energizes you?

Assistance: What are the needs of the people around you? Where can you fill in the gaps?



WEEK 4

SOCIAL

SERMON NOTES

DAY 1

"He who walks with the wise grows wise, but the companion of fools suffers harm." Proverbs 13:20 NIV

It's been said that we are the sum of the five people we spend the most time with. In Proverbs, the Bible underscores how our company can have an impact on our very character.

Who are you currently walking with? Who brings you closer to Jesus?

Who are your five? Do they need to change? How can you invite others into this group?

DAY 2

"A man of many companions may come to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Proverbs 18:24 NIV

Friends are of unspeakable value in our lives. However, in the age of social media, the lines have blurred between followers and friends.

Of your friends on social media, how many have you shared a meal with? What does this say about our society's view of connectedness?

How can you be more intentional about building fruitful relationships that go beyond "following" each other?

DAY 3

"A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity." Proverbs 17:17 NIV

Love isn't a one-time choice; it's a daily decision. We're blessed by those around us who make a daily commitment to love us. Likewise, we bless those around us when we choose to love them.

Who have you committed to loving?

Is there someone in your life that needs a friend? What friends do you feel that God is calling you to love at all times?

DAY 4

"As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another."
Proverbs 27:17 NIV

What we sometimes miss from this verse is when iron sharpens iron, sparks fly. As we seek to understand, listen to, encourage, and challenge our friends there will be moments when emotions can get hot, and people can even feel wounded. But it's in the depth of this that God is working to bring correction and transformation to his kids.

Do you seek out feedback? Do you enjoy tough conversations?

How might you be better open to people giving you feedback? Find two people you can ask for direct feedback.

DAY 5

"You can trust a friend who corrects you, but kisses from an enemy are nothing but lies." Proverbs 27:6

God divinely and strategically puts people in our life to bring correction and accountability in areas we might be blind. Our self-biases fail to give us a true analysis of our behaviors. A wise man doesn't trust himself too much.

What areas of your life do you need accountability in (sexual impurity, pride, finances, health, substance abuse, etc.)?

List two people you can ask to hold you accountable in these areas?
How can you ask them to help you?

DAY 6

"Greater Love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends." John 15:13 NIV

The depth of our love is measured by the depth of our sacrifice. This is true because the most valuable things in life cost us something. In this way, Jesus demonstrated the breadth of His love for us: by laying down His life on the cross.

Why does real love require a sacrifice?

What things in your life are hard for you to sacrifice for the people around you?

DAY 7

"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together.." Hebrews 10:24 ESV

Enjoy memorizing and meditating on this verse today.

You can also use this day to catch up on any reading from this week.

CREATIVE PRACTICE

"Unplugged Dinner"

Invite a group of friends over. Tell them to bring their favorite dish. Leave your phones at the door. Write down some fun party questions.

Here are some ideas to get you started:

If you could have lunch with anyone in history...

Childhood celebrity crush...

Trapped on an island with three people...

One food for the rest of your life...



WEEK 5

ROMANCE

SERMON NOTES

DAY 1

“Yet God has made everything beautiful for its own time. He has planted eternity in the human heart...” Ecclesiastes 3:11 NLT

It can be easy to feel incomplete and therefore look to a romantic relationship to fill this void. But Jesus models something very important to us, by never even going on a date: the deepest desires of our soul can only be filled by God.

In what ways have you looked to a romantic relationship for fulfillment?

What blessings did you find? What pain did you experience?

DAY 2

"Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord... Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her." Ephesians 5:22, 25 NIV

God gives us the freedom to choose who we enter into a romantic relationship with. A challenging question to ask yourself is, "Am I someone worth choosing?"

When choosing a partner, what attributes do you look for? How do these line up with the characteristics the Bible tells us to look for?

Which of your attributes make you worth choosing? What are your shortcomings?

DAY 3

"And his soul was drawn to Dinah the daughter of Jacob. He loved the young woman and spoke tenderly to her." Genesis 34:3 ESV

Chemistry between two people can be described as the way their souls interact, combine, and change. What we view as sexy will ultimately impact the future of our romantic life.

Define Sexy.

Describe a time you felt chemistry with someone. What drew you to them?

DAY 4

"Charm is deceptive, but a woman who fears God is too be praised."
Proverbs 31:30 ESV

We all want to find a partner with good character. Unlike charm, which is fleeting and deceptive, character is steady and lasting. When looking for a partner, consider their patterns over their potential.

What are the top 3 character traits you look for in a partner? Do you model these in your own life?

Which one of your character traits has shown a pattern of inconsistency?
How can you improve?

DAY 5

"Can two people walk together without first agreeing on the direction?"
Amos 3:3 ESV

There's progress in unity. If your partner doesn't celebrate and affirm your calling, you will never live it out. Unity is a picture of God's glory in and through us.

What would make it hard for someone else to be in unity and get along with you?

If you had the partner of your dreams, what would your life's calling be together?

DAY 6

"But God showed His great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners." Romans 5:8 NLT

Love found in a covenant is a love that is given through hardships, unmet expectations, and failures. The kind of love God gives to us, and thus calls us to give to our spouse, is not a love that we actually deserve. This covenant is a promise to pursue forever.

What married couple in your life has best displayed this type of covenant? What can you carry over into your own relationships?

What aspects of a marriage make it last?

DAY 7

"Your love delights me, my treasure, my bride. Your love is better than wine..." Song of Solomon 4:10 NLT

Enjoy memorizing and meditating on this verse today.

You can also use this day to catch up on any reading from this week.

CREATIVE PRACTICE

“Spontaneous Date Night”

Great romances never stop dating. Take your significant other on a date they'd never expect.

Here are some fun ideas:

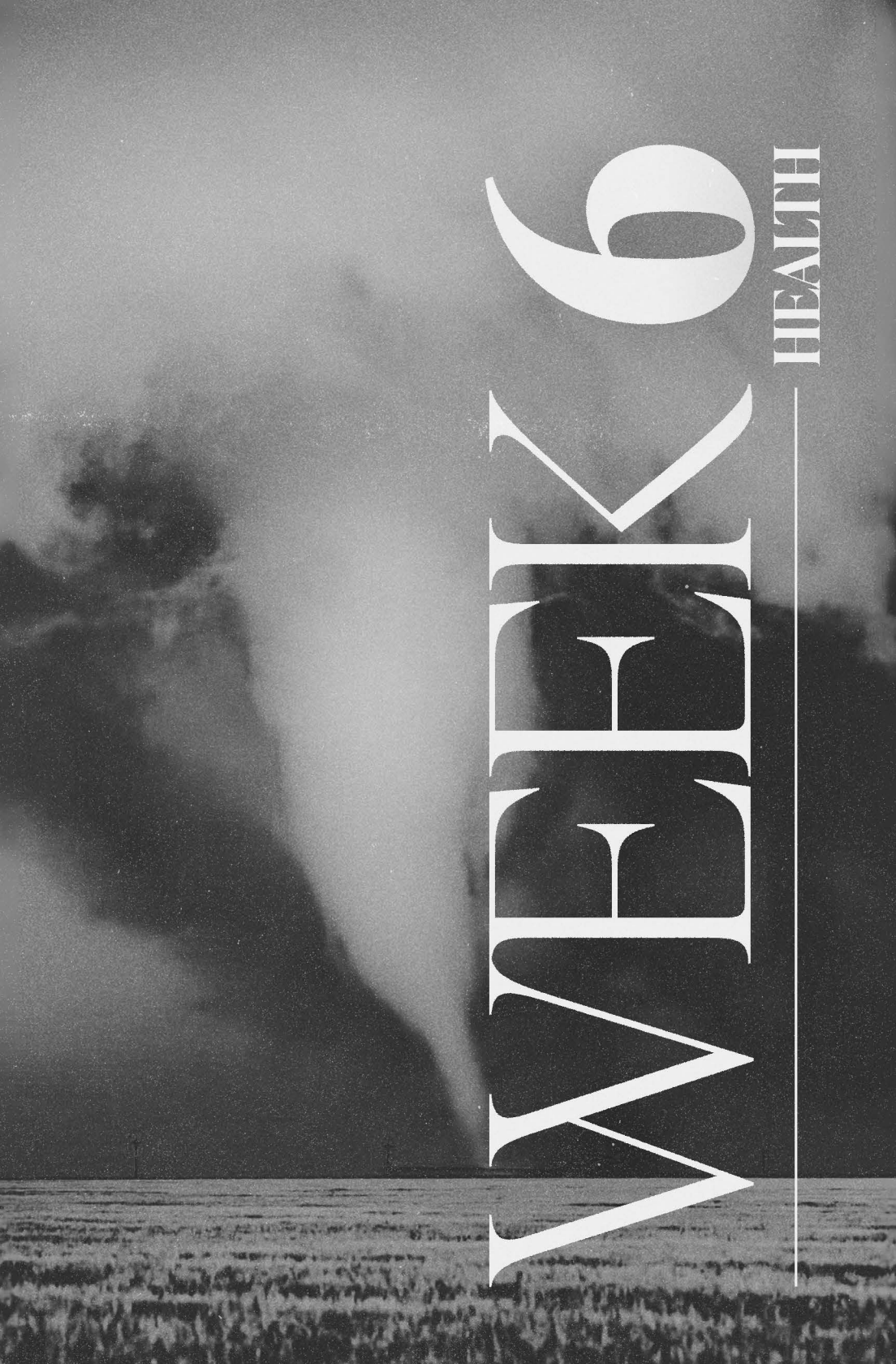
Recreate Your First Date

Go To A Farmers Market

Take A Dance Class

Play Mini Golf

See A Live Show



WEEK 6

HEALTH

SERMON NOTES

DAY 1

"..Honor God with your bodies." 1 Corinthians 6:20 NIV

Your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. Likewise, it is also a gift that has been given to you. How we use our bodies is a testimony of gratitude for this gift.

Do you think of your body as a gift from God? Why or why not?

In what ways do you treat your body like a temple? Are there areas upon which you could improve?

DAY 2

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." 1 Corinthians 10:31 NIV

Every moment, every action, every move you make counts for God. This is why no moment is without purpose. You have the opportunity to glorify God in something as practical as how you eat and exercise.

How we eat can have an impact on every part of our day. How can you prioritize eating healthy?

Physical activity is loaded with benefits to our overall well being and health. How does exercise fit into your daily or weekly rhythm?

DAY 3

"A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones." Proverbs 17:22 NIV

As our hearts give thanks, something amazing happens. Studies show that dopamine (our body's pleasure regulating chemical) is released in moments of gratitude. A cheerful heart literally changes our brain's chemistry.

What are you thanking God for today?

Keeping record of what God has done in your life is one of the greatest ways to give Him thanks. List 5 things you're grateful for in this season.

DAY 4

"Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in you?" 1 Corinthians 3:16 NIV

Stop for a minute and think on this reality: God's spirit is living inside of you.

How would you live differently if you acknowledged this truth on a daily basis?

Galatians 5:22-23 gives us some examples of what the Spirit produces in our lives. How have you seen some of these things unfold in your own life as you've grown into a deeper relationship with God?

DAY 5

"Jesus replied, 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.'" Matthew 22:37 NIV

We've often heard that we should love God with all of our heart. But here, Matthew is calling us into an even deeper understanding and relationship with God, where our thoughts and attitudes are given over in love to Him.

What we consume is what we digest. What are you consuming that might not lead to Godly living (i.e., a certain type of media, music, or conversations)?

What thoughts stir your affections for Jesus? Are there distractions that take you away from a mind set on Christ?

DAY 6

"Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD and shun evil. This will bring health to your body and nourishment to your bones." Proverbs 3:7-8 NIV

What a weird concept: fearing the Lord brings nourishment and health to the bones. In this sense, the word fear means to "stand in awe". When you stand in awe of the Lord, you're no longer in awe of your worries.

Where does your mind wander to most? Are you more inclined to worry or worship?

What do you worry about? Why? How can you begin to give this over to God?

DAY 7

"Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul." 3 John 1:2 ESV

Enjoy memorizing and meditating on this verse today.

You can also use this day to catch up on any reading from this week.

CREATIVE PRACTICE

“Fast”

Set a predetermined period of time aside this week to fast. It could be a meal, a day or multiple days.

Use moments of hunger as a reminder that God himself is your source and is enough.



WEEK 7

MONEY

SERMON NOTES

DAY 1

"For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." Matthew 6:21
NIV

How we use money can often paint the most accurate picture of our character and who we are; even our likes and dislikes. If someone were to look at your previous bank statements, would they see someone they want to get to know? Be friends with? Marry?

List the three things your bank account says you treasure most (i.e. coffee, entertainment, generosity).

Are you surprised by what you treasure? Are you surprised by what you don't treasure?

DAY 2

"You earn wages only to put them in a purse with holes." Haggai 1:6 NIV

A self-centered attitude towards money leads to never having enough-as though our money was stored in a pocket full of holes.

Recall a time when you felt like you didn't have enough.

How would you characterize your spending during that season? Was it marked by generosity?

DAY 3

"For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul." Mark 8:36 NKJV

Sometimes we work our whole life to gain a world that's fading. Meanwhile, God is asking us to turn our acts towards eternity.

How do you feel God speaking into your finances? Are there any changes He's leading you to make?

How can you make this a part of your monthly budget?

DAY 4

"Turn my heart towards your statutes and not toward selfish gain." Psalm 119:36 NIV

Every spending decision is a spiritual decision. When our heart is captivated by Christ, we're no longer mastered by materialistic desires. Rather, we take on a posture of generous living.

Who's the most generous person you know? How do you see this unfolding in the other areas of their life?

How can you adopt some of these practices into your own spending decisions?

DAY 5

“...Though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.” 2 Corinthians 8:9 NIV

Jesus gave up the riches of Heaven so you might know true wealth. Our giving is motivated by His most generous act of laying down His life, that we might have eternal life.

How does God's selfless generosity motivate yours?

In what area of your life is God calling you to be more generous?

DAY 6

"Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the Lord Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that there will not be room enough to store it." Malachi 3:10 NIV

This is the only place in Scripture where God tell us to test Him. He challenges us to see that what He can do with 90% is far greater than what we can do with 100%

Why does it seem so difficult to trust God with our tithe? What has kept you from tithing?

We challenge you to adopt a pattern of giving over the next 3 months. During that time, come back to this page and note how God has moved.

DAY 7

"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of Lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change."

James 1:17 ESV

Enjoy memorizing and meditating on this verse today.

You can also use this day to catch up on any reading from this week.

CREATIVE PRACTICE

“Surprise Generosity”

Pick three people you want to be generous towards this week. Find a fun way to bless them. Consider these examples: Buy a coffee. Write a card. Take a meal.

Reflect on this experience:

How did this make you feel?

What was their reaction?

Who did it bless more: you or them?

So what happens after we encounter God?

Life. Life happens.

And it's in a life devoted and surrendered to Christ that we find the strength, the courage and the resolve to face the journey of life. But not just to endure it, but to enjoy it, to find purpose in it, and to live it to its fullest extent. In Jesus we find freedom in every area of life.

This is the echo of encounter.

