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Welcome to the Student’s Life Application Bible. Most power tools come with a user’s manual or instructions of some kind. This book is no exception! God gave us his Word to tell us about himself: how he operates, what he’s done, and what his plans are for the people he created. This book is a “power tool” you can use. Wanna know more? Check this out: “All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16–17).

So, what’re we to make of that? For starters, it reminds us to make Bible reading a priority. That’s why the Student’s Life Application Bible was written—to help you understand and apply God’s Word. It’s easy to use and packed with helpful notes and other features. You’ll find the notes within the text, at the beginnings and endings of books, and at the back of the Bible.

At the back of the Bible you’ll find . . .

A LOOK AT THE BOOK
By following this simple Bible-reading plan, you’ll read through all the important biblical stories and passages in a year.

LIFE CHOICES REFERENCE INDEX
You’ll face many choices and questions in life—questions that need answers; choices that need wisdom. More than 100 topics are listed in this index. Each topic has a selection of relevant Bible passages and notes that relate.

INDEXES FOR “CHOICES,” “I WONDER,” ULTIMATE ISSUES, CHARTS, PERSONALITY PROFILES, MAPS, AND “KEEPING IT REAL”
Again, Scripture references listed for these notes are to help you locate the notes easily. The notes may or may not actually relate to the Scripture listed.

“WHERE TO FIND IT” INDEX
More than 70 of the best-known Bible stories are listed in this index, along with Jesus’ parables and miracles. Use either the Scripture references or the page numbers to quickly and easily find the story, parable, or miracle you want.

It’s all here. Just about everything you’ll need to understand and apply God’s word. The next step—actually taking time to read and study the Bible—is yours. So, what are you waiting for?

The following spread is a quick look at each of the special features:
EVER TURN ON a TV show a few minutes after it began? Chances are you turned it off before the show ended or flipped to a different channel because you couldn’t figure out what was going on. To fully understand the plot, you needed to see the beginning of the show.

The same truth applies to the Bible. If you’re having a hard time figuring out the “plot,” Genesis is the right place to begin your search for answers. Why? Genesis is the book of beginnings. In it you see the creation of the universe, the introduction of sin into the world, the beginning of God’s plan to rescue his people from the sin habit, and the birth of the nation of Israel.

In Genesis we also get our first glimpse into God’s character. Unlike everything else, God didn’t have a beginning. He always existed. Chapters 1 and 2 showcase his creativeness and power, while chapter 3 reveals his holiness and judgment of sin. Through the sad saga of Adam and Eve and their descendants, we view God’s incredible love for his people even when they constantly disobey him.

As you read Genesis, what other beginnings do you see? How do they enlarge your view of God?
PURPOSE: To record God’s creation of the world and his desire to have a people set apart to worship him

AUTHOR: Moses

AUDIENCE: The people of Israel

DATE WRITTEN: 1450–1410 B.C.

SETTING: The region presently known as the Middle East

KEY PEOPLE: Adam, Eve, Noah, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah, Jacob, Joseph

BEGINNINGS
Genesis introduces God as Creator of all that exists: the planets, plants, and people. All people were created in God’s own image.

DISOBEDIENCE
Sin results when people choose their own way instead of obeying God. Adam and Eve learned this the hard way. Only God can reverse the consequences of sinful choices.

PROMISES
God promised to protect and provide for his people. He specifically made promises known as covenants, which are binding agreements. God made a covenant with his people as a guarantee of what they could expect from him.

OBEDIENCE AND PROSPERITY
Obedience to God keeps our relationship with him intact and causes us to prosper like Abraham. Prosperity doesn’t necessarily mean wealth or other material possessions. Rather, true prosperity means living life as God created it to be lived—in the fullness of his blessings.
1 THE ACCOUNT OF CREATION

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* 2 The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

*Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. *And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. *God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.”
And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.

6Then God said, “Let there be a space between the waters, to separate the waters of the heavens from the waters of the earth.” And that is what happened. God made this space to separate the waters of the earth from the waters of the heavens. 4God called the space “sky.”

And evening passed and morning came, marking the second day.

TRUE WORTH 1:1-26

God created everything there is—the heavens, earth, plants, and animals. When God finished creating the earth, he then chose to make people in his image. The phrase “Let us make human beings in our image” in verse 26 does not mean that God made us exactly like himself, especially in a physical sense. Instead, we are reflections of God’s glory. We can reflect his characteristics like love, patience, forgiveness, kindness, and faithfulness.

Our worth is not defined by possessions, achievements, physical attractiveness, or popularity. Instead, it is based on knowing that God created us in his likeness. Knowing that you are a person of infinite worth gives you the freedom to love God, know him personally, and make a valuable contribution to the lives of those around you.

9Then God said, “Let the waters beneath the sky flow together into one place, so dry ground may appear.” And that is what happened. 10God called the dry ground “land” and the waters “seas.” And God saw that it was good. 11Then God said, “Let the land sprout with vegetation—every sort of seed-bearing plant, and trees that grow seed-bearing fruit. These seeds will then produce the kinds of plants and trees from which they came.” And that is what happened.

12The land produced vegetation—all sorts of seed-bearing plants, and trees with seed-bearing fruit. Their seeds produced plants and trees of the same kind. And God saw that it was good.

13And evening passed and morning came, marking the third day.

14Then God said, “Let great lights appear in the sky to separate the day from the night. Let them mark off the seasons, days, and years. 15Let these lights in the sky shine down on the earth.” And that is what happened.

16God made two great lights, the sun and the moon—the larger one to govern the day, and the smaller one to govern the night. He also made the stars. 17God set these lights in the sky to light the earth, 18to govern the day and night, and to separate the light from the darkness. And God saw that it was good.

19And evening passed and morning came, marking the fourth day.

20Then God said, “Let the waters swarm with fish and other life. Let the skies be filled with birds of every kind.” 21So God created great sea creatures and every living thing that swims and swarms in the water, and every sort of bird—each producing offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good. 22Then God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply. Let the fish fill the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”

23And evening passed and morning came, marking the fifth day.

24Then God said, “Let the earth produce every sort of animal, each producing offspring of the same kind—livestock, small animals that scurry along the ground, and wild animals.” And that is what happened. 25God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to produce offspring of the same kind. And God saw that it was good. 26Then God said, “Let us make human beings in our image, to be like ourselves. They will reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, the livestock, all the wild animals on the earth, and the small animals that scurry along the ground.”

27So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.

28Then God blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.”

MARRIAGE 2:18-24

God’s creative work was not complete until he made woman. He could have made her from the dust of the ground, as he made man. God chose, however, to make her from the man’s flesh and bone. In so doing, he illustrated that in marriage man and woman symbolically become one flesh. This is a mystical union of the couple’s hearts and lives. Throughout the Bible, God treats this special partnership seriously. If you are planning to be married, are you willing to keep the commitment that makes the two of you one? What are some helpful habits you can begin to develop that will help you honor that commitment?

29Then God said, “Look! I have given you every seed-bearing plant throughout the earth and all the fruit trees for your food. 30And I have given every green plant as food for all the wild animals, the birds in the sky, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—everything that has life.” And that is what happened.

1:26 Or man; Hebrew reads adam. 1:27 Or the man; Hebrew reads ha-adam.
Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good! And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.

So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested* from all his work.

And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

THE MAN AND WOMAN IN EDEN

When the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, 

12. Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!
And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.

2
So the creation of the heavens and the earth and everything in them was completed. On the seventh day God had finished his work of creation, so he rested* from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because it was the day when he rested from all his work of creation.

4 This is the account of the creation of the heavens and the earth.

THE ORIGIN OF HUMANITY

“Ever been part of the great ape debate? Wondering what that is? If you’ve read a biology textbook or those of other life sciences lately, you’ll find the theory that humans descended from apes. Or so Darwin’s theory of evolution goes. On the other side of the coin, however, is a quote like this from Genesis: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

But many educators, philosophers, and others tell us that we evolved from nothing into one-celled animals, then progressed up the zoological chain to evolve into Homo sapiens. Or perhaps a third option exists—God created people, using the process of evolution as his “laboratory.”

An uneasy tension exists between these views. Are you feeling it? Maybe you’re wondering which viewpoint is the “right” viewpoint.

According to the Bible, humans, animals, and everything else in the universe were created by God. The idea that we simply materialized out of nothing is a logical and scientific impossibility. Check this out. The first law of thermodynamics tells us that matter can neither be created nor destroyed by natural causes. That’s a big problem for an evolutionist. If only natural causes are involved, how did nothing turn into something? Also, how did that “something” develop intelligence, a definite personality, morality, and spirituality? By chance? Impossible!

So, what does this all add up to? Three words: God did it. This truth does not rule out the possibility of some kind of God-directed evolution; neither does it give it any support. And frankly, honest evolutionists will admit that their beliefs involve as much faith and speculation—if not more—as the creationists’.

The Bible (Genesis in particular) gives us one core fact about the origin of humanity: God created us in his own image. Exactly how he did that remains a matter of faith. So, what do you believe?

31 Then God looked over all he had made, and he saw that it was very good!
And evening passed and morning came, marking the sixth day.

2.2 Or ceased; also in 2.3. 2.6 Or mist.
19 So the Lord God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one.
20 He gave names to all the livestock, all the birds of the sky, and all the wild animals. But still there was no helper just right for him.
21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep. While the man slept, the Lord God took out one of the man’s ribs* and closed up the opening. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib, and he brought her to the man. 23 “At last!” the man exclaimed. “This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called ‘woman,’ because she was taken from ‘man.’”
24 This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.
25 Now the man and his wife were both naked, but they felt no shame.

3 THE MAN AND WOMAN SIN

The serpent was the shrewdest of all the wild animals the Lord God had made. One day he asked the woman, “Did God really say you must not eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden?”
26 Of course we may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,” the woman replied. “It’s only the fruit from the tree in the middle of the garden that we are not allowed to eat. God said, ‘You must not eat it or even touch it; if you do, you will die.’”
27 “You won’t die!” the serpent replied to the woman.
28 God knows that your eyes will be opened as soon as you eat it, and you will be like God, knowing both good and evil.”

6 The woman was convinced. She saw that the tree was beautiful and its fruit looked delicious, and she wanted the wisdom it would give her. So she took some of the fruit and ate it. Then she gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it, too. 7 At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves.
8 When the cool evening breezes were blowing, the man* and his wife heard the Lord God walking about in the garden. So they hid from the Lord God among the trees. 9 Then the Lord God called to the man, “Where are you?”
10 He replied, “I heard you walking in the garden, so I hid. I was afraid because I was naked.”

11“Who told you that you were naked?” the Lord God asked. “Have you eaten from the tree whose fruit I commanded you not to eat?”
12 The man replied, “It was the woman you gave me who gave me the fruit, and I ate it.”
13 Then the Lord God asked the woman, “What have you done?”

---

2:19 Or Adam, and so throughout the chapter. 2:21 Or took a part of the man’s side. 3:8 Or Adam, and so throughout the chapter.
"The serpent deceived me," she replied. "That's why I ate it."

14 Then the Lord God said to the serpent, 

"Because you have done this, you are cursed more than all animals, domestic and wild. 
You will crawl on your belly, 
groveling in the dust as long as you live. 
15 And I will cause hostility between you and the woman, 
and between your offspring and her offspring. 
He will strike* your head, 
and you will strike his heel."

16 Then he said to the woman, 

"I will sharpen the pain of your pregnancy, 
and in pain you will give birth. 
And you will desire to control your husband, 
but he will rule over you."*

17 And to the man he said, 

"Since you listened to your wife and ate from the tree 
whose fruit I commanded you not to eat, 
the ground is cursed because of you. 
All your life you will struggle to scratch a living 
from it. 
18 It will grow thorns and thistles for you, 
though you will eat of its grains. 
19 By the sweat of your brow 
will you have food to eat 
until you return to the ground 
from which you were made. 
For you were made from dust, 
and to dust you will return."

PARADISE LOST: GOD’S JUDGMENT

20 Then the man—Adam—named his wife Eve, because she would be the mother of all who live.* 21 And the Lord God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife. 

22 Then the Lord God said, "Look, the human beings* have become like us, knowing both good and evil. What if they reach out, take fruit from the tree of life, and eat it? 
Then they will live forever!" 23 So the Lord God banished them from the Garden of Eden, and he sent Adam out to cultivate the ground from which he had been made.

3:15 Or bruise; also in 3:15b. 3:16 Or And though you will have desire for your husband, / he will rule over you. 3:20 Eve sounds like a Hebrew term that means “to give life.” 3:22 Or the man; Hebrew reads ha-adam.
Adam and Eve’s disobedience (Gen. 3) brought sin into the human race. They may have thought their sin (eating a “harmless” piece of fruit) wasn’t very bad, but notice how quickly the sin habit developed in the lives of their children. Simple disobedience blossomed into outright murder. Adam and Eve acted only against God, but Cain acted against both God and man. A small sin has a way of growing out of control. Feeling controlled by the sin habit? The best way to break free is to put yourself under God’s control.

After sending them out, the Lord stationed mighty cherubim to the east of the Garden of Eden. And he placed a flaming sword that flashed back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Cain and Abel

Now Adam* had sexual relations with his wife, Eve, and she became pregnant. When she gave birth to Cain, she said, “With the Lord’s help, I have produced* a man!” Later she gave birth to his brother and named him Abel.

When they grew up, Abel became a shepherd, while Cain cultivated the ground. When it was time for the harvest, Cain presented some of his crops as a gift to the Lord.* Abel also brought a gift—the best of the firstborn lambs from his flock. The Lord accepted Abel and his gift, but he did not accept Cain and his gift. This made Cain very angry, and he looked dejected.

“Why are you so angry?” the Lord asked Cain. “Why do you look so dejected? You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you refuse to do what is right, then watch out! Sin is crouching at the door, eager to control you. But you must subdue it and be its master.”

One day Cain suggested to his brother, “Let’s go out into the fields.” And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother, Abel, and killed him.

Afterward the Lord asked Cain, “Where is your brother? Where is Abel?”

“I don’t know,” Cain responded. “Am I my brother’s guardian?”

But the Lord said, “What have you done? Listen! Your brother’s blood cries out to me from the ground! Now you are cursed and banished from the ground, which has swallowed your brother’s blood. No longer will the ground yield good crops for you, no matter how hard you work! From now on you will be a homeless wanderer on the earth.”

Cain replied to the Lord, “My punishment* is too great for me to bear! *You have banished me from the land and from your presence; you have made me a homeless wanderer. Anyone who finds me will kill me!”

The Lord replied, “No, for I will give a sevenfold punishment to anyone who kills you.” Then the Lord put a mark on Cain to warn anyone who might try to kill him.

So Cain left the Lord’s presence and settled in the land of Nod,* east of Eden.

The Descendants of Cain

Cain had sexual relations with his wife, and she became pregnant and gave birth to Enoch. Then Cain founded a city, which he named Enoch, after his son. Enoch had a son named Irad. Irad became the father of* Mehujael. Mehujael became the father of Methushael. Methushael became the father of Lamech.

Lamech married two women. The first was named Adah, and the second was Zillah. Adah gave birth to Jabal, who was the first of those who raise livestock and live in tents. His brother’s name was Jubal, the first of all who play the harp and flute. Lamech’s other wife, Zillah, gave birth to a son named Tubal-cain. He became an important craftsman.

What does God really expect from me? Do I have to be perfect in order to please him?

When you look at Abel’s life (Genesis 4), do you ever think that you have to be perfect in order to please God? Some people view God as an impossible taskmaster with impossibly high expectations. Ever think that way?

Here’s the deal: like any loving parent, God has expects his kids to act a certain way. (Think of your parents’ expectations for you.) Some Christians may tell you about God’s expectations based on where they are in their walk with him. An abundance of advice often contributes to the belief that God expects way too much. If you are feeling overwhelmed, you might be listening to others’ expectations, rather than God’s.

So, how can you please God? The story of Cain and Abel gives a significant piece to the puzzle. Both of these men brought something to God; yet only Abel’s sacrifice pleased God. One reason was because Cain’s heart was not really in his offering. He tried to please God out of obligation instead of love.

The first step in pleasing God is to examine our motivation for doing so. Do we really want to please him, or are we going through the motions because someone told us we should?

Obedience is the second step to pleasing God. It means loving him enough to listen to what he says, then following through on what we know he tells us to do.

Through the Holy Spirit, God speaks to us as we come to him with willing hearts. He gently shows us areas in our lives that we need to examine and change according to his timetable, not someone else’s.
expert in forging tools of bronze and iron. Tubal-cain had a sister named Naamah. 2One day Lamech said to his wives,

“Adah and Zillah, hear my voice; listen to me, you wives of Lamech. I have killed a man who attacked me, a young man who wounded me. 24 If someone who kills Cain is punished seven times, then the one who kills me will be punished seventy-seven times!”

THE BIRTH OF SETH
25 Adam had sexual relations with his wife again, and she gave birth to another son. She named him Seth,* for she said, “God has granted me another son in place of Abel, whom Cain killed.” 26When Seth grew up, he had a son and named him Enosh. At that time people first began to worship the Lord by name.

5 THE DESCENDANTS OF ADAM
This is the written account of the descendants of Adam. When God created human beings,* he made them to be like himself. 2 He created them male and female, and he blessed them and called them “human.”

3 When Adam was 130 years old, he became the father of a son who was just like him—in his very image. He named his son Seth. 4 After the birth of Seth, Adam lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 5 Adam lived 930 years, and then he died.

6 When Seth was 105 years old, he became the father of* Enosh. 7 After the birth of* Enosh, Seth lived another 807 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 8 Seth lived 912 years, and then he died.

9 When Enosh was 90 years old, he became the father of Kenan. 10 After the birth of Kenan, Enosh lived another 815 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 11 Enosh lived 905 years, and then he died.

12 When Kenan was 70 years old, he became the father of Mahalalel. 13 After the birth of Mahalalel, Kenan lived another 840 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 14 Kenan lived 910 years, and then he died.

15 When Mahalalel was 65 years old, he became the father of Jared. 16 After the birth of Jared, Mahalalel lived another 830 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 17 Mahalalel lived 895 years, and then he died.

18 When Jared was 162 years old, he became the father of Enoch. 19 After the birth of Enoch, Jared lived another 800 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 20 Jared lived 962 years, and then he died.

21 When Enoch was 65 years old, he became the father of

ABEL Let’s face it. The first time you read Abel’s story, maybe you thought you knew all about him. Maybe you had him pegged as the teacher’s pet—the one who got all A’s in class and always raised his hand with the right answer on his lips. Or maybe he’s too close in personality to someone in your family who seems “perfect.” Does that sound like your view of him?

Abel was the second child born into the world, but the first one to obey God. He worshiped in a way that pleased God. That really bothered his brother Cain. Maybe Abel suspected that Cain was angry with him. Brothers and sisters know things like that about each other. Yet Abel trusted his brother even when Cain suggested they go out to the field together.

The Bible doesn’t tell us why God accepted Abel’s gift and rejected Cain’s, but both brothers knew what God expected. Cain seemed to take a shortcut. Only Abel fully obeyed. He is remembered for his obedience and faith (Hebrews 11:4), and he is called “righteous” (Matt. 23:35).

When it comes to obeying God, what’s your style? Wholehearted like Abel? Halfhearted like Cain?
of Methuselah. 23 After the birth of Methuselah, Enoch lived in close fellowship with God for another 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 24 Enoch lived 365 years, walking in close fellowship with God. Then one day he disappeared, because God took him. 25 When Methuselah was 187 years old, he became the father of Lamech. 26 After the birth of Lamech, Methuselah lived another 782 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 27 Methuselah lived 969 years, and then he died. 28 When Lamech was 182 years old, he became the father of a son. 29 Lamech named his son Noah, for he said, “May he bring us relief from our work and from the painful labor of farming this ground that the Lord has cursed.” 30 After the birth of Noah, Lamech lived another 595 years, and he had other sons and daughters. 31 Lamech lived 777 years, and then he died. 32 By the time Noah was 500 years old, he was the father of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

6 A WORLD GONE WRONG

Then the people began to multiply on the earth, and daughters were born to them. 2 The sons of God saw the beautiful women* and took any they wanted as their wives. 3 Then the Lord said, “My Spirit will not put up with* humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years.” 4 In those days, and for some time after, giant Nephilites lived on the earth, for whenever the sons of God had intercourse with women, they gave birth to children who became the heroes and famous warriors of ancient times.

5 The Lord observed the extent of human wickedness on the earth, and he saw that everything they thought or imagined was consistently and totally evil. 6 So the Lord was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart. 7 And the Lord said, “I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them.” 8 But Noah found favor with the Lord.

THE STORY OF NOAH

9 This is the account of Noah and his family. Noah was a righteous man, the only blameless person living on earth at the time, and he walked in close fellowship with God. 10 Noah was the father of three sons: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. 11 Now God saw that the earth had become corrupt and was filled with violence. 12 God observed all this corruption in the world, for everyone on earth was corrupt. 13 So God said to Noah, “I have decided to destroy all living creatures, for they have filled the earth with violence. Yes, I will wipe them all out along with the earth!

14 Build a large boat from cypress wood* and waterproof it with tar, inside and out. Then construct decks and stalls throughout its interior. 15 Make the boat 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. 16 Leave an 18-inch opening* below the roof all the way around the boat. Put the door on the side, and build three decks inside the boat—lower, middle, and upper. 17 Look! I am about to cover the earth with a flood that will destroy every living thing that breathes. Everything on earth will die. 18 But I will confirm my covenant with you. So enter the boat—you and your wife and your sons and their wives. 19 Bring a pair of every kind of animal—a male and a female—into the boat with you to keep them

5:29 Noah sounds like a Hebrew term that can mean “relief” or “comfort.” 6:2 Hebrew daughters of men; also in 6:4. 6:3 Greek version reads will not remain in. 6:14a Traditionally rendered an ark. 6:14b Or gopher wood. 6:15 Hebrew 300 cubits (138 meters) long, 50 cubits (23 meters) wide, and 30 cubits (13.8 meters) high. 6:16 Hebrew an opening of 1 cubit (46 centimeters).
VIOLENCE

On Friday nights at seven o’clock you’re practically guaranteed to find Tyrice and Jordan in one of two places. Check first at Tyrie’s. If they’re not there, munching pizza and watching horror movies on DVD, try the mall. They probably will be standing in line at the movie theater, anxiously waiting for the chance to purchase tickets for the newest cinematic tale of gore.

In the last couple of years, these guys have seen hundreds of violent movies and played even more violent video games. It doesn’t matter what the plot is—deranged killers on the loose, murderous monsters on the rampage, the latest hitman roleplay game—as long as there are some gruesome torture scenes, lots of mutilated bodies, and gallons of blood and guts, Tyrie and Jordan are satisfied.

“That one scene was so weak,” Jordan complains as he ejects a DVD one Friday.

“Which one?” Tyrice responds.

“You know, the one where he shaved the girl into that giant meat grinder... I mean, the blood didn’t even look real.”

“Tell me about it!” Tyrice agrees. “Every scene in the movie was just ripped off from another movie.”

“Want to watch Babies with Rabies now?”

“Now, let’s play Hitman Heist. I wanna try out your new game system. But let me go get some more cherry soda first.”

Ever think that the violent scenes on the news, in movies, or in video games seem almost “tame”? That’s what’s known as being desensitized. It means you’re so used to violence, it doesn’t bother you anymore. Know what? Even though God has seen it all, he’ll never be desensitized.

Check out his response to violence in Genesis 6:11-13. What’s your response?

alive during the flood. 20Pairs of every kind of bird, and every kind of animal, and every kind of small animal that scurries along the ground, will come to you to be kept alive. 21And be sure to take on board enough food for your family and for all the animals.”

22So Noah did everything exactly as God had commanded him.

7 THE FLOOD COVERS THE EARTH

When everything was ready, the Lord said to Noah, “Go into the boat with all your family, for among all the people of the earth, I can see that you alone are righteous.

2Take with you seven pairs—male and female—of each animal I have approved for eating and for sacrifice,* and take one pair of each of the others. 3Also take seven pairs of every kind of bird. There must be a male and a female in each pair to ensure that all life will survive on the earth after the flood. 4Seven days from now I will make the rains pour down on the earth. And it will rain for forty days and forty nights, until I have wiped from the earth all the living things I have created.”

5So Noah did everything as the Lord commanded him.

6Noah was 600 years old when the flood covered the earth. 7He went on board the boat to escape the flood—he and his wife and his sons and their wives. 8With them were all the various kinds of animals—those approved for eating and for sacrifice and those that were not—along with all the birds and the small animals that scurry along the ground. 9They entered the boat in pairs, male and female, just as God had commanded Noah. 10After seven days, the waters of the flood came and covered the earth.

11When Noah was 600 years old, on the seventeenth day of the second month, all the underground waters erupted from the earth, and the rain fell in mighty torrents from the sky. 12The rain continued to fall for forty days and forty nights.

13That very day Noah had gone into the boat with his wife and his sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—and their wives. 14With them in the boat were pairs of every kind of animal—domestic and wild, large and small—along with birds of every kind. 15Two by two they came into the boat, representing every living thing that breathes. 16A male and female of each kind entered, just as God had commanded Noah. Then the Lord closed the door behind them.

17For forty days the floodwaters grew deeper, covering the ground and lifting the boat high above the earth. 18As the waters rose higher and higher above the ground, the boat floated safely on the surface. 19Finally, the water covered even the highest mountains on the earth, rising more than twenty-two feet* above the highest peaks. 20All the living things on earth died—birds, domestic animals, wild animals, small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the people. 21Everything that breathed and lived on dry land died. 22God wiped out every living thing on the earth—people, livestock, small animals that survived.

WHY WORRY? 7:15-16

Many have wondered how this animal kingdom’s doming happened. Did Noah and his sons spend years collecting them? Actually, God took care of that job while Noah and his sons built the boat. They didn’t have to worry about how the animals would arrive. Often we do just the opposite of Noah. We worry about details in our lives over which we have no control, while neglecting specific areas (such as attitudes, relationships, responsibilities) that are under our control. What task has God given you? What aspects of your life seem out of your control? Are you willing to put aside worry over the things you can’t change and concentrate on what God has given you to do?  

7:2 Hebrew of each clean animal; similarly in 7:8. 7:20 Hebrew 15 cubits (6.9 meters).
scurry along the ground, and the birds of the sky. All were destroyed. The only people who survived were Noah and those with him in the boat. 4And the floodwaters covered the earth for 150 days.

8 THE FLOOD RECEDES

But God remembered Noah and all the wild animals and livestock with him in the boat. He sent a wind to blow across the earth, and the floodwaters began to recede. 2The underground waters stopped flowing, and the torrential rains from the sky were stopped. 3So the floodwaters gradually receded from the earth. After 150 days, 4exactly five months from the time the flood began,* the boat came to rest on the mountains of Ararat. 5Two and a half months later,* as the waters continued to go down, other mountain peaks became visible.

6After another forty days, Noah opened the window he had made in the boat 7and released a raven. The bird flew back and forth until the floodwaters on the earth had dried up. 8He also released a dove to see if the water had receded and it could find dry ground. 9But the dove could find no place to land because the water still covered the ground. So it returned to the boat, and Noah held out his hand and drew the dove back inside. 10After waiting another seven days, Noah released the dove again. 11This time the dove returned to him in the evening with a fresh olive leaf in its beak. Then Noah knew that the floodwaters were almost gone. 12He waited another seven days and then released the dove again. This time it did not come back.

13Noah was now 601 years old. On the first day of the new year, ten and a half months after the flood began,* the floodwaters had almost dried up from the earth. Noah lifted back the covering of the boat and saw that the surface of the ground was drying. 14Two more months went by,* and at last the earth was dry!

15Then God said to Noah, 16“Leave the boat, all of you—you and your wife, and your sons and their wives. 17Release all the animals—the birds, the livestock, and the small animals that scurry along the ground—so they can be fruitful and multiply throughout the earth.”

18So Noah, his wife, and his sons and their wives left the boat. 19And all of the large and small animals and birds came out of the boat, pair by pair.

20Then Noah built an altar to the Lord, and there he sacrificed as burnt offerings the animals and birds that had been approved for that purpose.* 21And the Lord was pleased with the aroma of the sacrifice and said to himself, “I will never again curse the ground because of the human race, even though everything they think or imagine is bent toward evil from childhood. I will never again destroy all living things. 22As long as the

8:4 Hebrew on the seventeenth day of the seventh month; see 7:11. 8:5 Hebrew On the first day of the tenth month; see 7:11 and note on 8:4. 8:13 Hebrew On the first day of the first month; see 7:11. 8:14 Hebrew The twenty-seventh day of the second month arrived, see note on 8:13. 8:20 Hebrew every clean animal and every clean bird.

NOAH

Ever been disgusted by the amount of evil you hear about in the world? Welcome to Noah’s world. The story of Noah’s life involved not one, but two great and tragic floods. The first was a flood of evil. The world had become so bad that there was only one person left who remembered the God of creation, perfection, and love.

God’s response to this flood of evil was a 120-year-long last chance. During those years, he had Noah build a large advertisement of what God was going to do. There’s nothing like a huge boat built on dry land to make a point! Of course, everyone thought Noah was crazy. Despite the jeers of his friends and neighbors, Noah continued to build. When the flood came, no one could say he or she hadn’t been warned. For Noah, obedience to God meant a long-term courageous commitment to a project.

Many of us have trouble sticking to any project, whether or not it is directed by God. (Does that describe you?) Or we back off when opposition occurs. Noah obeyed God and worked on one project longer than we even expect to live. The only project we have that is like Noah’s is our life. What is God building in your life? A stronger faith? Perseverance? How are you aiding or hindering his building plan?
earth remains, there will be planting and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night.”

9
GOD CONFIRMS HIS COVENANT
Then God blessed Noah and his sons and told them, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth. 2 All the animals of the earth, all the birds of the sky, all the small animals that scurry along the ground, and all the fish in the sea will look on you with fear and terror. I have placed them in your power. 4 I have given them to you for food, just as I have given you grain and vegetables. But you must never eat any meat that still has the lifeblood in it.
5 And I will require the blood of anyone who takes another person’s life. If a wild animal kills a person, it must die. And anyone who murders a fellow human must die. 6 If anyone takes a human life, that person’s life will also be taken by human hands. For God made human beings* in his own image. 7 Now be fruitful and multiply, and repopulate the earth.”

WHAT’S WRONG WITH MURDER? 9:5-6
Here God explains why murder is so wrong: to kill a person is to kill someone made in God’s image. All people possess the qualities that distinguish us from animals: morality, reason, creativity, and self-worth. When we interact with others, we interact with beings made by God, beings to whom God offers eternal life. How do your actions show the value you place on human life?

10
This is the account of the families of Shem, Ham, and Japheth, the three sons of Noah. Many children were born to them after the great flood.

DESCENDANTS OF JAPHETh
2 The descendants of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras.
3 The descendants of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Ripthah, and Togarmah.
4 The descendants of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Rodanim.* 5 Their descendants became the seafaring peoples that spread out to various lands, each identified by its own language, clan, and national identity.

DESCENDANTS OF HAM
6 The descendants of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan.
7 The descendants of Cush were Seba, Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The descendants of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.
8 Cush was also the ancestor of Nimrod, who was the first heroic warrior on earth. 9 Since he was the greatest hunter in the world,* his name became proverbial. People would say, “This man is like Nimrod, the greatest hunter in the world.” 10 He built his kingdom in the land of Babylonia,” with the cities of Babylon, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh. 11 From there
he expanded his territory to Assyria,* building the cities of Nineveh, Rehoboth-ir, Calah, 2land Resen (the great city located between Nineveh and Calah). 13Mizraim was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, 14Pathrusites, Casluhites, and the Caphtorites, from whom the Philistines came.* 15Canaan’s oldest son was Sidon, the ancestor of the Sidonians. Canaan was also the ancestor of the Hittites, 16 Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, 17Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, 18 Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites. The Canaanite clans eventually spread out, 19and the territory of Canaan extended from Sidon in the north to Gerar and Gaza in the south, and east as far as Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zebulon, near Lasha. 20These were the descendants of Ham, identified by clan, language, territory, and national identity.

DESCENDANTS OF SHEM

21Sons were also born to Shem, the older brother of Japheth. * Shem was the ancestor of all the descendants of Eber.

22The descendants of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram.

23The descendants of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Mash.

24Arphaxad was the father of Shelah,* and Shelah was the father of Eber.

25Eber had two sons. The first was named Peleg (which means “division”), for during his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups. His brother’s name was Joktan.

26Joktan was the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 27Hadoram, Uzal, Dilkah, 28Obal, Abimael, Sheba, 29Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. All these were descendants of Joktan. 30The territory they occupied extended from Mesha all the way to Seiph in the eastern mountains.

31These were the descendants of Shem, identified by clan, language, territory, and national identity.

CONCLUSION

32These are the clans that descended from Noah’s sons, arranged by nation according to their lines of descent. All the nations of the earth descended from these clans after the great flood.

11 THE TOWER OF BABEL

At one time all the people of the world spoke the same language and used the same words. 2As the people migrated to the east, they found a plain in the land of Babylonia* and settled there.

3They began saying to each other, “Let’s make bricks and harden them with fire.” (In this region bricks were used instead of stone, and tar was used for mortar.) *Then they said, “Come, let’s build a great city for ourselves with a tower that reaches into the sky. This will make us famous and keep us from being scattered all over the world.”

4But the Lord came down to look at the city and the tower the people were building. 5“Look!” he said. “The people are united, and they all speak the same language. After this, nothing they set out to do will be impossible for them! *Come, let’s go down and confuse the people with different languages. Then they won’t be able to understand each other.”

6In that way, the Lord scattered them all over the world, and they stopped building the city. 7That is why the city was called Babel,* because that is where the Lord confused the people with different languages. In this way he scattered them all over the world.

THE LINE OF DESCENT FROM SHEM TO ABRAM

10This is the account of Shem’s family.

Two years after the great flood, when Shem was 100 years old, he became the father of* Arphaxad. 11After the birth of* Arphaxad, Shem lived another 500 years and had other sons and daughters.

12When Arphaxad was 35 years old, he became the father of Shelah. 13After the birth of Shelah, Arphaxad lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters.* 14When Shelah was 30 years old, he became the father of Eber. 15After the birth of Eber, Shelah lived another 403 years and had other sons and daughters.

16When Eber was 34 years old, he became the father of Peleg. 17After the birth of Peleg, Eber lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters.

18When Peleg was 30 years old, he became the father of Reu. 19After the birth of Reu, Peleg lived another 209 years and had other sons and daughters.

20When Reu was 32 years old, he became the father of

10:11 Or From that land Assyria went out. 10:14 Hebrew Casluhites, from whom the Philistines came, and Caphtorites. Compare Jer 47:4; Amos 9:7. 10:21 Or Shem, whose older brother was Japheth. 10:24 Greek version reads Arphaxad was the father of Caiuan, Caiuan was the father of Shelah. Compare Luke 3:36. 11:2 Hebrew Shinar. 11:9 Or Babylon. Babel sounds like a Hebrew term that means “confusion.” 11:10 Or the ancestor of; also in 11:12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24. 11:11 Or the birth of this ancestor of; also in 11:13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25. 11:12-13 Greek version reads 1 “When Arphaxad was 135 years old, he became the father of Caiuan. *After the birth of Caiuan, Arphaxad lived another 430 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. When Caiuan was 130 years old, he became the father of Shelah. After the birth of Shelah, Caiuan lived another 330 years and had other sons and daughters, and then he died. Compare Luke 3:35-36.
INTRODUCTION

We usually think of the Bible as one book. That’s logical because it looks like one book and claims to come from one Author. We also speak of it as God’s Word. But when we read and study the Bible, we discover that it is actually an entire library between two covers. Not one book, but 66 (39 in the Old Testament; 27 in the New Testament)! Each book has its own style and uniqueness—yet each book contributes to the message God wants to get across with the whole Bible. What’s more, though we use the word book, some parts of the Bible are letters (like Paul’s letter to the Romans) or collections (like the Psalms). Still, the overall message of the Bible is one message because it has one main Author—God. The reason the styles throughout the Bible vary is because God teamed up with dozens of people to write his Word.

HOW THIS PLAN IS DIFFERENT

There are many plans to help you read through the Bible library. You can even start at page one and read straight through. The approach taken here, however, is designed to help you get a flavor of the whole Bible by reading selections from it throughout a year. You’ll read the best-known stories and many important lessons. Some parts of the Bible offer so much help that they can be read every day. Among these are the Gospels, Psalms, and Proverbs.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Each day’s reading has a title and a question. These application questions can help you as you read. So, get ready. You’re about to start the awesome adventure of reading God’s Word and getting to know him.
OLD TESTAMENT

Genesis 1:1—2:3 How It All Began
Why do human beings have value and worth?

Genesis 2:15—3:24 Adam and Eve
In what ways are you like those first humans?

Genesis 4:1-16 Cain and Abel
How do you handle anger?

Genesis 6:9-22 Noah Builds a Boat
What is the most difficult act that God has asked you to do?

Genesis 7:1-24 All Aboard?
If you were alive at this time, would you have been invited to get on the boat? Why or why not? Would you have accepted? Why or why not?

Genesis 8:1-22 A Long Wait
How would you have spent your time on the boat?

Genesis 9:1-17 Rules and Rainbows
What could you do the next time you see a rainbow to show that you take God’s covenant seriously?

Genesis 11:1-9 The Tower of Babel
Is there anyone you trust more than God? Why or why not?

Genesis 12:1-9; 17:1-8, 15-16 God’s Promises to Abraham and Sarah
How do you usually make decisions? How is God involved in those decisions?

Genesis 18:1-15 Unusual Visitors
How do you make guests feel welcome in your home? at school?

Genesis 19:1-29 Destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah
How does God feel about sin?

Genesis 21:8-21 Hagar and Ishmael
In what ways have you seen God work through the messes in your life?

Genesis 22:1-19 Abraham’s Painful Decision
Could you have made the same decision as Abraham? Why or why not?

Genesis 24:1-27 A Faithful Servant
How do you approach difficult tasks?

Genesis 24:28-67 Isaac and Rebekah
How has God surprised you recently?

Genesis 25:19-34 Jacob and Esau
How do you treat your brothers or sisters?

Genesis 27:1-40 Jacob Tricks His Father
On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 5 being really important) how important is honesty in your relationship with your parents? Why?

Genesis 28:10-22 Jacob Meets God
In what places in your life has God seemed the most real?

Genesis 29:14-30 Jacob’s Marriages
How do you show your love for others?

Genesis 31:1—33:18 Jacob Returns Home
What happens inside you when you try to avoid a problem?

Genesis 37:1-31 Jacob’s Children
How are disagreements settled in your family?

Genesis 39:1-22 Joseph in Trouble
How do you react when you’re treated unfairly?

Genesis 39:40 Dreams in Prison
When have you helped someone even though you had your own problems?

Genesis 41:1-36 Dreams in the Palace
Whom has God used to give you guidance?

Genesis 41:37-57 Joseph in Charge
How well do you handle big responsibilities?

Genesis 42:1 Joseph Sees His Brothers Again
If you had the chance to get back at someone who wronged you, would you take it? Why or why not?

Genesis 43:1 Back to Joseph
How quick are you to forgive? Why?

Genesis 44:1 Crisis in the Palace
How do you react when someone points out a mistake you’ve made? Why?

Genesis 45:1-30 Finding a Lost Son
What do you appreciate about your parents?

Genesis 49:1-30 Jacob’s Final Words
How do you show your appreciation?

Exodus 1:8—2:10 Moses Is Born
What legacies have your parents or grandparents passed on to you?

Exodus 1:10—2:10 Moses Is Born
How has God protected you from birth till now?

Exodus 2:11-25 Moses on the Run
When was the last time you found yourself running from God? Explain.

Exodus 3:1 God’s Burning Bush
In what ways has God made himself known to you?

Exodus 4:1-17 Moses Isn’t Sure
How willing are you to do what you feel God wants you to do? Explain.
Exodus 5  Resistance
   How do you handle others’ resistance toward doing what’s right?
Exodus 6:1-13  Rejection
   What would it cost you to do what God wants?
Exodus 7:1-14  A Stubborn Ruler
   What decisions, if any, have you tried to resist that you knew God wanted you to make?
Exodus 7:15—9:7  Five out of Ten Plagues
   When do you try to bargain with God? Why?
Exodus 9:8—10:29  Four More Plagues
   What are the worst consequences you’ve seen that were a result of wrong actions?
Exodus 11; 12:29-36  The Ultimate Plague
   In what amazing way has God rescued you from a problem?
Exodus 13:17—14:31  A Narrow Escape
   When have you experienced God’s protection?
Exodus 15:22-27; 17:1-7  God Provides Water
   When are you most tempted to complain? Why?
Exodus 16  God’s Unusual Food Supply
   For what specific gift did you last say thanks to God?
Exodus 18  Helpful Advice
   Who are the dependable advisers in your life?
Exodus 19  An Appointment with God
   How would you prepare to meet with God?
Exodus 20:1-21  The Ten Commandments
   How important are these rules to you? Explain.
Exodus 32  The Gold Calf
   What distracts you from obeying God?
Exodus 40  Instructions about God’s Tent
   When are you most aware of God’s presence in your life?
Numbers 12  Trouble in the Family
   What do you do when you find yourself feeling jealous of someone?
Numbers 13:1—14:4  Spying on the Promised Land
   What do you usually do when you’re faced with an impossible task?
Numbers 14:5-45  A Majority That Was Wrong
   How often are your decisions based on peer pressure?
Numbers 21:4-9  Another Hard Lesson
   What can you do to avoid repeating mistakes?
Numbers 22:5-35  Balaam and His Donkey
   How do you avoid making a wrong choice when the right choice seems hard?
Deuteronomy 29  Moses Reviews God’s Actions
   How do you keep track of what God has done for you?
Deuteronomy 30  Moses Challenges the People
   How do you show that you love God?
Deuteronomy 31:1-8  Moses Appoints New Leaders
   In what ways have you been a leader?
Deuteronomy 34  The Death of Moses
   How would you most like to be remembered?
Joshua 1  God Takes Over
   Which of the qualities listed in this chapter would you most need to be like Joshua? Why?
Joshua 2  Spies Visit Jericho
   What surprising individuals has God used in your life? Why do you think God chose them?
Joshua 3  The Invasion of Canaan
   What instructions has God given you recently? How carefully did you follow them? Why?
Joshua 5:13—6:27  The Battle of Jericho
   In what way has God worked through you to bring about something that would normally be impossible?
Joshua 7  Ultimate Consequences
   What strongly negative or positive consequences have you experienced?
Joshua 10:1-15  The Longest Day
   How do you know that God is powerful? Explain.
Joshua 23  Joshua Warns the Leaders
   Which of Joshua’s warnings do you most need to obey?
Joshua 24:1-31  Joshua’s Last Words
   How have the events of history provided hope for you?
Judges 4:4-24  Deborah Goes to War
   What do you do to help suffering people?
Judges 6  Gideon Becomes a Judge
   What examples of obedience can be found in your life?
Judges 7  Gideon and the Midianites
   In what area of your life do you need to trust God more? Explain.
“So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God.” (Romans 5:11).

You know someone who’s just started a relationship with Jesus Christ . . . so what can you do to help?

First of all, you can be excited about this opportunity. Second, you need to be serious about this responsibility. Read Romans 5:11 again. You have the privilege of helping someone grow in his or her new relationship with your friend Jesus Christ. Here are some ways you can help a new Christian and Jesus grow closer. Remember, we all need FRIENDS.

Follow up with your new Christian friend by getting together regularly. Get together within 48 hours after your friend receives Christ, and at least once a week during the next six weeks (Matthew 28:20).

Reinforce what Christ has done in your friend’s life. Do this by looking at Scriptures that affirm God’s commitment to Christians (John 14:20; Hebrews 13:5; Colossians 2:13-14; 1 John 5:13; Galatians 5:25).

Involve your friend in your church activities. Take your friend with you and help answer any of his or her questions (Hebrews 10:24-25).

Exhibit Christ in your life through your actions and words. You don’t have to be perfect, just someone who wants to obey and please God (Colossians 3:17).

Nurture your friend’s spiritual growth. A new Christian is like a newborn baby who needs spiritual food and care. Try using the 14 encounters with God included in this section (1 Peter 2:2-3).

Do things together. Spending time together will give you opportunities to encourage your friend and put your faith into practice (Acts 14:21-22).

Stand by your friend in both the good and bad times. Your friend will fall down spiritually. Get ready to help him or her to get up and go again (Ephesians 4:11-16).

You have recently trusted Jesus Christ to be your Savior . . . so now what do you do?

First of all, you must know that through Christ you have become friends with God. Read Romans 5:11. Remember:

- You realized that your sin was keeping you from a relationship with God.
- You understood that Jesus Christ died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sin and that he rose again from the dead.
- You prayed, asking Jesus to forgive your sins and be your Savior.

Next, please understand that you have begun an exciting and lasting friendship. As in any relationship, getting to know someone takes time—it doesn’t just happen by itself. (Make sure you have a friend who has been a Christian for a while who can help you grow in your new faith. If no one has contacted you, you should go back to the person who helped you become a Christian and ask for help.)
You can grow closer to God just like you grow closer to people. God created you to have a relationship with him, to be his very own son or daughter. Now that you’re his child and friend, he will patiently help you get to know him better and better.

Here are some ideas you can use to help you and God become close friends. Remember, all it takes is TIME:

**Talk to God through prayer.** To help you learn how to talk to God, the 14 encounters with God include ideas for prayer. Give them a try. God will listen when you talk to him.

**Investigate God’s Word.** Decide on a time and place to read the Bible each day. The schedule for 14 encounters with God will help you know what to read. This will help you grow.

**Make it practical.** One of the best ways to learn is by doing. The 14-encounter schedule includes action steps to help you make your friendship with God active and practical.

**Express your thoughts.** You know how important it is to show appreciation to a friend. As you finish your daily time with God, tell him thank you. During the next 14 encounters with God, try to keep a personal journal. Simply write down your thoughts, your questions, and, most important of all, why you’re thankful to God!

Finally, to get to know God better, try using the following “14 Encounters with God” feature. These give you some great ways to spend time with God and find out more about who he is and who he wants you to be.
encounter 1 IT’S GUARANTEED

• ASSURANCE
You recently became a Christian. Have you had any doubts about whether or not Jesus really came into your life? Do you wonder if you’ll really go to heaven someday?

Talk to God: “Father, thank you for giving me a relationship with you. Jesus, thank you for giving me life. Please teach me and help me learn more about you. Amen.”


Make it Practical: Check out “I Wonder”—1 John 5:10-12, page 1290, or “Keeping It Real”—Matthew 7:24-27, page 969. How can you put the ideas presented here into action in your own life?

Express your thoughts: In your journal, write a description of when, where, and how you became a Christian. Say thanks to God!

encounter 2 PART OF THE FAMILY

• GOD, OUR FATHER
Everyone knows what it’s like to not feel totally accepted by others. Did you know that when you became a Christian, God adopted you into his family and accepted you unconditionally?

Talk to God: “Dear God, thanks for making me part of your family. You accept me. That’s awesome! Amen.”


Express your thoughts: In your journal, make a list of what you like about being part of God’s family. Don’t forget to thank him.

encounter 3 NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

• GROWTH
OK, now that you’re a new Christian, what’s next? Well, the best relationships are those that grow and deepen. It’s the same way in your relationship with Jesus Christ. It’s time for growth.

Talk to God: “Lord, help me to let my roots sink down into you. Thanks for helping me grow. Amen.”


Express your thoughts: Think of one way that you’d like to grow spiritually, share it with one friend, and write it in your journal. Then ask God to help you do what you’ve decided to do.
encounter 4 Time to Talk

• PRAYER
You know how good friends love to talk with each other. God, our heavenly Father, is ready for a heart-to-heart talk all the time. Conversation with God is a must!

**Talk to God:** “God, I’m so glad we can talk anytime. Thank you that you'll listen to my needs. Help me learn to listen to you. Amen.”


**Make it Practical:** “I Wonder”—1 Kings 3:3-14, page 344 or “Keeping It Real”—Ecclesiastes 5:1-7, page 658.

**Express your thoughts:** Commit yourself to spending at least three minutes in prayer every day. In your journal, keep a record of your prayer requests and answers. Tell God thanks for those answers.

encounter 5 Dig In

• BIBLE
When you get something new, you often receive an instruction manual. With your new life in Christ, you need God’s instruction manual, the Bible. God communicates to us through his Word.

**Talk to God:** “Dear God, thank you for showing me what you’re like through your Word. Help me to read it, study it, and obey it. Amen.”

**Investigate God’s Word:** 2 Timothy 3:14-17. Memorize verse 16.

**Make it Practical:** “I Wonder”—John 20:31, page 1093, or “Keeping It Real”—Isaiah 41:10, page 710.

**Express your thoughts:** Commit yourself to spending five minutes a day reading the Bible. As a result of something you read, write down in your journal something you will do. Ask God to help you.

encounter 6 Jesus Did It All

• JESUS, OUR SAVIOR
Friendships get stronger when you really get to know the other person. You have trusted Christ to be your Savior and to give you new life. Really get to know who he is and what he has done! It’s incredible!

**Talk to God:** “Jesus, you are so powerful! I’m thankful that you hold everything together, including me! Amen.”

**Investigate God’s Word:** Colossians 1:15-23. Memorize verse 17.

**Make it Practical:** “I Wonder”—Judges 17:6, page 258.

**Express your thoughts:** Ask a friend to tell you what he or she really likes about Jesus. In your journal, write a note to Jesus about what you really appreciate about him.

encounter 7 Solid Rock

• OBEDIENCE
A good foundation is essential for a house to stand strong. Jesus wants you to realize that obeying God will give you your life a solid foundation.
Need answers to nagging questions? Check out the Scriptures under each topic.

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