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## INTRODUCTION

### YOU ARE ON THE EDGE OF A GREAT ADVENTURE!

This journal is designed to be a tool that helps you become more intentional in meeting with the God of the universe. Here at the Bridge, we call that “No Group.” It’s the regular rhythm of meeting with God one-on-one in His Word and allowing that love to send us out loving those around us in response to the love he has shown us.

As followers of Jesus, nothing is more important than maintaining a close intimate relationship with Jesus. In John 15:4-5, Jesus teaches His disciples,

*Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.*

Jesus tells his followers that if they “abide”- stay connected to Him, literally their lives will explode with fruit! At the same time, if they lose that connectedness, they will find that they are totally unable to be effective in knowing and following Jesus.

“No Group” time is really about “abiding.” We listen for God’s voice and we allow that love to send us out to serve others. We’re looking forward to the stories of what God is going to do as He meets with you in His Word and uses you to invite the striving to something really real!

## HOW DO I GET STARTED IN “NO GROUP?”

We've found that to get started, plan to set aside at least 15 minutes a day, though you should feel free to take as much time as you need. As we seek to meet with God in this “No Group” time here at The Bridge, we've developed a few of the tools that have been helpful in helping us connect with Jesus.

### READING PLAN:

As a church, we are in the pattern of reading one chapter from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament 5 days a week. However, on weekends we will read from Psalms and Proverbs.

The reading plan is available via our church app available on our website or through a bookmark you can pick up at the church office.

# R E A L

**READ**  
PRAYERFULLY

**EXPLORE**  
THE TEXT

**ACTION**  
STEP

**LIVE IT**  
OUT

## HOW DO I USE REAL AS I READ?

For many people, the habit of reading God's Word and journaling can seem like a difficult task. For others, they've read Scripture for some time but it doesn't make a practical difference. So how do we find the balance? The process we've found most helpful is something that we call "R.E.A.L."



# R

## READ PRAYERFULLY

Every time we read, we read with a dependence upon God to reveal His truth and guide us. We begin by asking God to speak to us through His Word. Maybe pray a short prayer like this,

*Thank you Lord that you want to speak to me. You loved me enough to reveal yourself, to send your Son to reveal your love, and have placed your Holy Spirit in our lives. Thanks for the Bible and how it reveals your love to me. As I read today, speak to me and give me the courage to be obedient to what you would say. In your name I pray, Amen.*

Next, we read the passage until a verse or a few verses stands out. When it does, write it at the top of the journal page.

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# E



## EXPLORE THE TEXT

Think about the phrase or word that you are praying about. Ask some questions of the passage like,

*"What is God teaching us about Himself, the world, or ourselves?"*

*"What would this have meant to those that originally heard it? What would I be feeling if I were there?"*

*"What words or phrases are standing out to me?"*

*"Ask God, why are you leading me to THIS verse or phrase today? What are you trying to teach me?"*

Key Insight

The primary purpose here is to “chew” on what God is saying to you through His Word.

As you write your insights in the journal, draw a box on the right hand side of the page like this and write “Key Insight.” Try to boil all of your insights into a single thought or phrase and write that thought inside.

# A



## ACTION STEP

In light of what you've just read, ask God to show you some tangible step that you can take in light of what God is saying to you. Try to be as specific as possible. When you know what that is, draw a small box and write out that step. Some possibilities include:

*"Rather than worrying about my job today. I will thank God for His love and faithfulness towards me."*

*"I will ask one person today if I can pray for them as God allows."*

*"I will choose to forgive " \_\_\_\_\_ " today. Even if it means looking past how they've hurt me."*



## LIVE IT OUT

Our “No Group” time doesn’t end when we close our Bibles. In fact, the surest test of our love for Jesus is our willingness to obey what He has revealed. One of the most important realities in learning to hear God’s voice is that we are faithful to do what He commanded. It’s here that our “Up” time with Jesus, moves us “Out” engaging the world with His love and mercy.

Begin by asking the question, “Did I live out yesterday’s action step?” If so, “check the box.” This way, your “No Group” journal becomes a way to see not only the insights God is revealing to you in His Word, but also how are you doing responding to His grace in a life of obedience?

Finally, close your “No Group” time in prayer. Thank God for revealing himself through His Word and ask for the courage to be obedient. Pray something like,

*Lord,*

*Thanks for speaking through your Word today. I don't want to just know about you, I want to know you. Let me see your love for me today and may that love strengthen me to live for you alone. Give me courage and faithfulness to live out what you've asked. For your name's sake! Amen.*

Let's put it all together.

The following page contains a sample of what a No Group journal entry might look like using the "R.E.A.L." method.



"He is greater than I. I must decrease that He might increase."  
John 3:30

John was willing to get out of the way for Jesus. People were following Him, some even confused him as the savior. Yet for John, making a name for Jesus was so much more important than making a

Key Insight:

Rather than making a name for myself, seek to point people towards Jesus and don't worry about being recognized.

name for himself. I need to remember that right now.

There have been a number of situations lately, where I don't feel like I am getting the recognition I deserve. But, is my getting recognized the point? God is reminding me today that I don't serve to be recognized, but that others might recognize Jesus.

- Find one way to serve someone today in such a way that I can't get any of the credit. Don't do it to be recognized, but to show the love of Jesus.

Lord,

Let me live for you today. Keep my focus on how others can see your love rather than me or my accomplishments. Let me get out of the way that you might be glorified. Amen

As you launch into this No Group time, for the first time or the five thousandth, our prayer for you is the same. It's found in Ephesians 3:17-21.

*...that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (ESV)*

The God of the universe is waiting to meet with you and is ready to really speak into your life. We can't wait to see what He will do as He works in and through the power of His life changing Word! As you abide in Him, your life will explode fruit as you experience the joy of being led and transformed by Him.

#### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Want to dig deeper? For additional resources to deepen in your "No Group" time, visit our website at [www.thebridgebiblechurch.com/NoGroup/](http://www.thebridgebiblechurch.com/NoGroup/)