

# HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

This journal exists to help us interact with the scriptures. Instead of being passive listeners, we want to actively engage with the Word of God, allowing it to change us deeply. Each week you will find 4 sections to help you contemplate and respond to God.

## Section 1: SERMON NOTES

We begin each week in the community of our Sunday gathering, hearing the Word of God proclaimed beside our brothers and sisters in Christ. As you listen to the sermon, allow the Holy Spirit to point out truths and phrases for special attention. Write these down and mull over them during the week.

## Section 2: SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

In this section, we'll give you an overview of the week's readings, and you'll have space to read, reflect, and respond to a set of Bible passages. Feel free to use this in any way that helps you connect with God. Perhaps you'll want to read all the passages in one day and reflect on them the next day. Or you could read one passage each day, reflecting and responding as you go. It's up to you.

- ▶ **READ:** Every week, there are passages listed for each day (5x week). Begin by reading through the passage for that day. As you read, take notes about the words or phrases that stand out to you. This is not yet a time to ask why these phrases are standing out to you. God will show you what he wants you to learn in due time.
- ▶ **REFLECT:** What main themes are highlighted in the passage? What questions come to your mind? What insights do you have into God, His character, or your own life, as you reflect on this passage?
- ▶ **RESPOND:** Thinking back over the passage, where do you sense God drawing your attention? Can you identify action steps to take in response? What can you offer back to God in prayer as a response to this passage? Take time to pray for the energy, desire, and courage to take these actions steps. This is essential. Unless the scripture is changing the way we live and think and relate, it is not having its full effect in our lives.

## Section 3: PSALM

The Psalms are to be used for a time of prayer throughout each week. Sometimes they go along with the other readings, but often they're simply

Psalms that speak of God's character, and are the response of His people to who God is and what He has done. In this section, feel free to doodle, color, highlight, or underline. The Psalms are poetry, prayer, an authentic human and creative expression of our relationship to God. As you read and pray the Psalms, allow God to engage both your reason and your imagination.

#### **Section 4: REVIEW**

After the Scripture passages and Psalm pages, you'll find a fourth page with three questions that will prompt you to reflect on the readings for the past week. Take time to respond to these questions. Pause to consider all the passages you've read for the week. What are the main themes God has impressed upon you in His Word?

As you work through this book, we pray that the Holy Spirit enables you to engage with scripture and with God in a fresh, deeply-transformative way. As God reveals insights to you, share them with friends, with your Life Group, with family, and with your fellow church members. As we grow in love of God and His word, let us also grow as a community of believers.