*Jesus said to the people who believed in him, You are truly my disciples if you remain faithful to my teachings. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.*

**John 8:31-32**

**Bible Readings for Students**

**(Grades 7-12)**



**WEEK 1** **November 4-10**

**WEEK 2 November 11-17**

**WEEK 3 November 18-24**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**My Gift to You**



This journal is my gift to you to help you grow. As a Christian, I can think of nothing more exciting than watching students’ lives change as they grow closer to God. These **BreakOUTS** will help you develop some of the **FAITH SKILLS** necessary for spiritual growth by encouraging you to have a consistent Quiet Time.

**Why a Quiet Time?**

Our world is noisy and busy and time with God can be easily passed over. A **quiet time** is where you take some time out of your day and make an appointment to connect with God. Even Jesus took this time— *Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed* (Luke 5:16). The bottom line is that you can’t be a healthy Christian without time with God. When you spend time with God…

* you will fall in love with him more
* receive direction for daily living
* have his strength to keep going
* grow to be more like Jesus

**Why is there a memory verse listed on each page for me to write out?**

Here are some of the benefits of memorizing Bible Verses:

* helps you resist temptation
* helps me make wise decisions
* strengthens me when I’m under stress
* encourages me when I’m sad
* helps me share with unbelievers

Considering these benefits, we think it is a worthy and achievable goal to try to memorize at least one verse a month and possibly one verse a week. The verse is chosen from one of the readings. Writing it out on each page from your version of the Bible should help you memorize it along with other things you do to memorize stuff. We encourage you to choose other verses on your own to memorize as you are able.

Desiring God’s best for you,

**PJ**

The  **H.E.A.R**. journaling method can help you read the Bible in order to understand and respond to God’s Word. **H.E.A.R**. stands for **Highlight, Explain, Apply, and Respond**. Each of these four steps are important in hearing God speak to us through his Word.

It is pretty simple. After praying for the Holy Spirit’s guidance, Consider **Step #1** the lettter **H**. This exercise will remind you to read with a purpose. In the course of your reading, one or two verses will usually stand out and speak to you. After reading the passage of Scripture, **Highlight** at least one verse that speaks to you. *Write down the reference or even the verse(s).*

After you have highlighted the passage, move to **Step #2** the letter “**E**”. At this stage you will **EXPLAIN** what the text means. By asking some simple questions, with the help of God’s Spirit, you can understand the meaning of a passage or verse. A good study Bible can be helpful with this step. Ask questions like: *who was it written to and what did it mean to them? What are some differences between the original audience and us? How does it fit with the verses before and after it? How would you summarize what it says in your own words?*At this point, you are beginning the process of discovering the specific and personal word that God has for you from His Word. What is important is that you are engaging the passage and wrestling with its meaning.

After writing a short summary of what you think the text means, look at **Step #3** the letter “**A**” which is for **Apply**. This application is the heart of the process. Everything you have done so far leads to this step. As you have done before, answer a series of questions to uncover the significance of these verses to you personally, questions like: *what is the principle in the verse(s) that is for you? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid? A promise to claim? Is there something new to learn about God, myself or others?* These questions bridge the gap between the ancient world and your world today. They provide a way for God to speak to you from the specific passage or verse.

Finally, focus on **Step #4** the letter “**R**” for **Respond**. *Your response to the passage may take on many forms. You may write a specific action. You may describe how you will be different because of what God has said to you through His Word. You may indicate what you are going to do because of what you have learned. You may respond by writing out a prayer to God.* For example, you may ask God to help you to be more loving, or to give you a desire to be more generous in your giving. Keep in mind that this is your response to what you have just read.

***Don’ be intimidated if reading the Bible is new or challenging to you****. The BreakOUTS are designed to help you learn how to do it. Start by reading the suggested verses and just doing Step #1 until you get used to having a Quiet Time. When you are ready add Step #2…and then Step #3…and then Step #4. And if reading a few verses isn’t enough, also do the Extra Reading. Learning these skills could take you a few weeks, a few months or even a couple of years. The most important thing is that you get started and keep working at it. If you drop off and don’t do it for awhile, don’t give up. Just start back up the next day. Remember it is about a relationship with God not checking off something on a list. And we are here to help you take the next steps because we know that engaging God’s Word on your own will change your life!*

**DAY 1** ACTS 19:23-27 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 19:23-41

**WEEK 1**

This is another occasion where Paul faces opposition from people opposed to his teachings about Christ which at that time were simply called “the Way”. Those who made the idols associated with worshipping the false god Artemis are upset that if people become followers of the Way, they won’t be buying idols which will idol makers money. But they are also upset that their false god would be discredited. When Paul writes about this later in the letter to the Ephesians,

he doesn’t describe the opposition of the people but rather he focuses on the intense spiritual battle (6:13-19). We may or may not have to deal with physical oppositions as Christians, but we will have to deal with spiritual opposition.

\*As you invite God into your day, take a moment to consider anyone you are in conflict with because you are a Christian or because you are trying to live by Christian values. Ask God to help you be mindful that your battle isn’t really with that person but that it’s a spiritual battle. Ask God to help you share the gospel with them in what you say and do.

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

**E**XPLAIN what the verse(s) mean…ask who was it written to and what did it mean to them? What are some of the

 differences between the original audience and us? How does it fit with the verses before and after it? How would

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 **A**PPLY it to your life…what is the principle in the verse(s) that is for you? Is there a command to obey? A sin to avoid?

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 **R**ESPOND …write down a prayer or an action as a result of what you have just learned. Be specific and follow through.

 \*See suggestion above for one idea.

**MEMORY VERSE** MATHEW 28:18(WRITE IT OUT) **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**DAY 2** ACTS 20:7-12 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 20:1-12

**WEEK 1**

Paul is finishing up his third missionary journey. After spending three years at Ephesus, he travels to revisit some of the places he has been before. In Troas, Paul meets with the believers at their usual church service which goes late into the night because Paul is leaving the next day. And one guy named Eutychus falls asleep and falls out of a window and dies! There may be a lesson there about falling asleep in church but remember this is real- a young man dies in a tragic accident, but then Paul raises him back to life! This is not an everyday occurrence but in the early life of the church the disciples empowered by God did these kinds of miracles to demonstrate that their message was true- Jesus is God’s son come to give us eternal life!

\*As you start your day with God, take time to slow down and read, think about and work at memorizing Matthew 28:18. Jesus has all authority, even over death. Be encouraged that what you do for Jesus has been assigned to you by the King!

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

**E**XPLAIN what the verse(s) mean…ask who was it written to and what did it mean to them? What are some of the

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**DAY 3** ACTS 20:17-21 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 20:13-38

**WEEK 1**

Paul’s mission was to be a witness to the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God sent him to step out of his comfort zone (as a Jew) and go to a very different culture and people, the Gentiles. It was there that he made his greatest impact on the world. This was not easy but it didn’t matter. The mission was too important. God calls us to the same mission— to be a witness to a world desperately in need of his salvation. It is our task to share with the world how incredible God’s grace is and how desperately we are in need of his salvation.

\*Today, as you welcome God into your day take time to reflect on God’s grace and what it means in your life. Ask God to help you be a witness of that grace today in what you say and do. Pray too that North Park would be that kind of people.

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

**E**XPLAIN what the verse(s) mean…ask who was it written to and what did it mean to them? What are some of the

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**DAY 4** ACTS 21:12-14 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 21:1-36

**WEEK 1**

After his conversion to be a follower of Christ, Paul viewed his life differently. He understood that to be a follower of Jesus is to enter into a relationship of training to become like him and to do those things that matter to him. And just as Jesus had literally given his life in obedience to God, Paul was willing to do the same. You see Jesus and Paul knew nothing of someone claiming to be a Christian but not being interested in learning how to be like Jesus and to care about the things that Jesus cares about. You may not be asked to die for Jesus, but to follow Jesus is to live for him.

\*As we consider what really matters in life, take a moment to reflect on our God’s grace that comes to us in Christ. [Watch or listen to](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIyjsLlevwY) the song *Nobody* on-line by Casting Crowns to draw our hearts back to the centrality of Christ in our lives.

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

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**DAY 5** DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9 **EXTRA READING** MATTHEW 28:16-20

**WEEK 1**

 ACTS 1:8

Today’s verses in Deuteronomy are called the “Shema” (meaning “Hear,” the first word in the original Hebrew). They’re the most significant in Judaism and were named by Jesus as the most important ([Mark 12:29-30](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Mark+12.29-30&version=NIV)). They come immediately after God gives the Ten Commandments. They also talk about how parents are to use every opportunity—especially those that occur in daily, routine events—to instruct children (and grandchildren!). The opportunities to discuss and teach the 10 Commandments are endless: when we’re dealing with aging parents, when a child is involved in a theft, when the family down the street is torn apart by an affair, when you feel the pressure of having the “latest and greatest” cell phone. Each of these presents us with an opportunity to bring one of the commandments into the conversation. One of the greatest gifts parents can give their children is an understanding of the Ten Commandants and how often they come into play in the normal course of their life. Children would be wise to appreciate these learning opportunities too.

\*Today, begin to make a determined effort to take advantage of daily situations as opportunities to teach or learn God’s laws. Look for these opportunities and start and/or participate in the conversation. Say a prayer like this “God as I go through my day, help me to see how your commandments can apply. Help me to bring them up in discussions both to teach and to learn, especially in my family. Use me to be a blessing today. Thank you for loving me.”

 **H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

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**Prayer: Thank Yous and Requests**

**WEEK 1**

*And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

*You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.*

**John 14:13-14**

Use this page to record prayers of thanks to God for who He is, lessons he is teaching you and answers to specific prayers. Also use it to list needs you have and things you are asking God to help you or others with.

**DAY 1** ACTS 21:37-40 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 21:37-22:29

**WEEK 2**

Paul is being arrested in Rome for his faith and as he is being transported, he makes a simple request. Paul is a unique messenger sent by God to the Gentiles to share the message of the Way (what we call Christianity today). He has a Jewish heritage but is also a Roman citizen (Gentile heritage). And as he is being transported to prison and because he is a Roman citizen, he asks a simple question: *Can I say something?* And amazingly the guards say yes and Paul gets an opportunity to share his story of how he became a follower of Jesus! Paul is an example of just how passionate we can be to share our story with others no matter what the circumstances. And maybe we would have more opportunities if we would just ask, “Hey do mind if I share with you something that has changed my life?” God may just give us the opportunity to do so just as he did for Paul.

\*As you invite God into your day, take a few minutes to think through how you would briefly share your story of how you came to faith. Read Paul’s story as a model (22:1-21)- what were the circumstances? How did you hear the gospel? How did your life change or what is God teaching you? Now pray and ask God that he will give you an opportunity to share it with someone- and be ready to ask if you can share. You may get a “no” but you may get a “yes”.

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

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 A promise to claim? Is there something new to learn about God, myself or others?

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 \*See suggestion above for one idea.

**MEMORY VERSE** MATHEW 28:19(WRITE IT OUT) **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**DAY 2** ACTS 23:1-5 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 22:30-23:35

**WEEK 2**

Paul is going through an intense experience- he has angered many people and is even being imprisoned because of his belief that Jesus is Lord. He is a faithful witness to God’s grace and that people need to repent and place their faith in Jesus. Here he is before the Sanhedrin, a Jewish religious court and they are questioning his beliefs about Jesus. He is about to be punched by the someone so he lashes out but then learns that the person he is talking to is the High Priest. Immediately he apologizes confessing he did not know he was the High Priest. Wow! So even though the High Priest was certainly not acting in a way deserving of respect Paul models for us how a Jesus follower responds to authority- respect the position because their authority was given to them by God (Romans 13:1). This can be a real challenge especially with people in positions of authority who treat you poorly.

\*As you open your heart to God today, reflect on the people in your life who are in positions of authority. Which ones are easy to obey? Which ones are a challenge? Commit now to submit to the people in authority over you unless they ask you to do something sinful. Ask God to help you live this out in a way that pleases him.

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

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**DAY 3** ACTS 24:24-27 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 24:1-27

**WEEK 2**

What do you do when things don’t go the way you planned them? Paul finds himself in jail for more than two years. Does he pout? Sulk? Get angry? Give up? Paul may have struggled with some of these thoughts, but what we do know is that he kept doing what he had been doing all along- telling people about Jesus. No matter where he was and no matter the circumstances, he told people about Jesus. When things don’t go as planned or we don’t get to serve the way we wanted, it is easy to quit. But we don’t have to; a better way is to keep going and trust God to use us how he wants.

\*Take some time to read and memorize Matthew 28:19 today. The mission God gave us is to go and make disciples. This is not easy and requires perseverance empowered by the Spirit. Ask God to help you be a disciple-maker for him.

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

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**DAY 4** ACTS 25:22 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 25:1-22

**WEEK 2**

As we follow Paul from his arrest to imprisonment in Rome, it is amazing how many people he has an opportunity to speak to about Jesus. Later he will write in his letter to the Colossians, “Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity (4:5). Paul seized every opportunity to share the gospel with others and God continually opened doors for him. Similarly, when we truly grasp the love God demonstrated for us through the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus, it compels us to live for him and share that joy with others in both good and bad circumstances.

\*As we consider our motivation for sharing our faith so others can come to know Christ, take a moment to reflect on our God’s grace in your life. [Watch or listen to](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIyjsLlevwY) the song *Dead Man Walking* on line by Jeremy Camp and reflect on how great God’s salvation is…ask God to help you share it with others.

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

**E**XPLAIN what the verse(s) mean…ask who was it written to and what did it mean to them? What are some of the

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**MEMORY VERSE** MATHEW 28:19(WRITE IT OUT) **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

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**DAY 5** GALATIANS 6:9-10 **EXTRA READING**  GALATIANS 6:1-10

**WEEK 2**

Our love for one another—inside the family of Jesus followers—has a powerful, attractive effect on the world around us. When people outside the church look on as we love one another, there’s a magnetic effect as people are drawn to experience the same love we do. But for this to happen, we as Jesus followers can’t give up on one another in the middle of the process. Paul teaches this reality using the illustration of farming. He encourages Jesus-followers to “not become weary” and “not give up” (vs 9). Like a tired farmer, if we give up on the planting, cultivating, and weeding, the crop will most likely be lost. In the same way, if we quit on serving one another, the harvest of seeing people coming to faith in Christ is in jeopardy: a reality with much greater consequences than a lost crop of corn or beans.

\*So then, let’s not grow weary or discouraged in our service to one another, especially to those who belong to the family of Jesus followers. As you begin your day, say a prayer something like this, “God I want people to know you. Would you please help North Park to be a family where we persevere in loving and caring for each other just as you loved us. Help me today to be a testimony for you through my love for people in my church.”

**H**IGHLIGHT verses…choose at least one verse that speaks to you. Write down the reference or even the verse(s).

**E**XPLAIN what the verse(s) mean…ask who was it written to and what did it mean to them? What are some of the

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**Prayer: Thank Yous and Requests**

**WEEK 2**

*And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*

*You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.*

**John 14:13-14**

Use this page to record prayers of thanks to God for who He is, lessons he is teaching you and answers to specific prayers. Also use it to list needs you have and things you are asking God to help you or others with.

**DAY 1** ACTS 25:25-29 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 25:23-26:32

**WEEK 3**

1 Peter 3:15 says “But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,” Peter could use Paul as a model for this. While being accused of being insane because he believes Jesus is God’s Son who died and rose again, Paul respectfully defends his “reasonable” faith. We don’t need a theology degree or to be the best the public speaker in order to be ready. We just need to know Jesus and be learning each day what his Word says so we can share it through what we say and do. As someone has said, “God doesn’t need our ability as much as he needs our availability”.

\*Are you curious about how you can defend and share your faith better? Go to this website: <https://seanmcdowell.org/>

And look under the video tab. Choose one of the short videos that will help answer a relevant question about being a Christian in our culture. If you like it, go back to watch more or when you have questions you aren’t sure about.

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**DAY 2** ACTS 27:21-25 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 27:1-44

**WEEK 3**

If you can you really ought to read this entire chapter to get the full story. Following God is a journey with many twists and turns. Paul was not expecting all this to happen when he chose to go to Rome, but again we see him serving God wherever he is. All the men on the ship respect Paul’s decisions even though he is one of the prisoners and he gets to share his faith to the locals and the governor. These things may not have been part of the plan, but Paul made the most of the circumstances. Our lives don’t always go according to plan either, but we can still choose to make the most of every opportunity.

\*As you start your day with God, take time to slow down and read, think about and work at memorizing Matthew 28:20. Find comfort in the fact that the one whom we serve his promised to always be with us to the very end. No matter how things seem to be working out, Jesus is right there with us working out his plan.

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**DAY 3** ACTS 28:1-6 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 28:1-16

**WEEK 3**

Some people believe that if you are spiritual, then you can pick up poisonous snakes, be bitten and not die! But I would not try that because that is not the point of this passage. Paul did not go looking for a snake to play with. God was protecting Paul and used this event to open up a door for sharing the gospel. Paul now had a chance to tell the people he was not a god but he did know the real One. God doesn’t create miracles for everyone, but his purposes remain unchanged. You don’t need deadly snakes to prove you are holy. You can demonstrate that by staying true to God’s purposes and living according to his ways.

\*This passage shows why it is important to interpret scripture properly…it could literally cost you your life! That’s one of the reasons we encourage you to use the H.E.A.R. bible reading method. Our hope is that it will be a tool that helps you understand the meaning and application of the Bible more clearly. Start small maybe doing one or two steps and then work towards doing steps 3 and 4. Start with 1 or 2 days and then work towards 3, 4 or 5 days a week. Whatever you do keep working at it so that God can speak into your life and you can understand correctly what he is saying!

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**DAY 4** ACTS 28:21-24 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 28:17-31

**WEEK 3**

When Paul arrives in Rome, he is placed in house arrest (28:16) as he waited for his trial. He could not leave his house to tell people about Jesus. I might have given up or felt sorry for myself or been angry at God. But Paul didn’t do any of those things- he had a mission to fulfill and this was just a God-sized obstacle to overcome. If Paul can’t go to the people, then the people can come to Paul. Absolutely amazing! Sometime we won’t get the opportunities to serve God that we‘d like, but opportunities are around us everywhere. Paul decided to serve no matter what the circumstances were and God used him to make a difference. Not everyone believed but many did. We can’t choose our circumstance but we can choose our attitude.

\*As we consider our commitment to share the gospel message, take a moment to reflect on our God’s work in your life and what a privilege it is to serve him. [Watch or listen to](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IIyjsLlevwY) the song *Build My Life* on line by Pat Barrett to draw our hearts back to the centrality of Christ in our lives.

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**DAY 5** ACTS 2:41-47 **EXTRA READING** ACTS 2:1-14

**WEEK 3**

Jesus promised the Father would empower the disciples with the Holy Spirit and in Acts 2 we see that happen and the church springs into action. Peter preaches and thousands respond in faith, are baptized and become part of the church. The church experiences unity, generous giving, sharing with those in need, witnessing, worshipping, sharing in communion and fellowship and serving the Lord. Following Jesus’ example, his disciples met people’s physical and spiritual needs. This is also a model for what we should be doing today as the church. Just as God did in the first century, he continues to empower his people to do the work he has called us to so that he would be glorified and that more people may know him.

\* Take a moment to offer a prayer to God reorienting your heart towards him and the church. Pray something like, “Dear God, you know the desires of my heart, and I surrender them to your goodness and wisdom. I know that only you can give me the power to live for you. Help me find joy in meeting the physical and spiritual needs of others today. Glorify yourself through me today.”

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**Prayer: Thank Yous and Requests**

**WEEK 3**

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