

DEVOTIONAL MAGAZINE SAMPLE

Forward

Sep • Oct • Nov 2020

Volume 17 Issue 1

High School students have their own magazine, providing 13 weeks of daily devotions, articles, columns, and fun ideas—all leading to spiritual growth.



Feature Article:
"There Has to Be More": An Interview with Justin Jackson

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Three Months of Devotions:
"Beginnings"
13 Week Study through
Genesis, John, and more.

Features:
Gender Identity
18 and Pregnant
#neverthirstagain



The Family Theme applies to every age group—elementary through adult.

Week One:

September 5 - 11, 2020

Theme:

God Created Everything

Study Text: Genesis 1:1–2:3

The Saturday-Sunday devotion focuses on preparing for the weekly Bible study.

Saturday - Sunday

Read Genesis 1:1–2:3

Suppose you filled a piñata with tiny pieces of candy. Now suppose you shattered that piñata and watched the candy pieces fly in a hundred different directions, each one landing in a predetermined location to form the words, *Happy Birthday*. Not a single piece missed its mark. That seems pretty ludicrous, doesn't it?

Sadly, many people accept a similar theory to explain the origin of the universe: the Big Bang Theory. God's Word, though, paints a far more creative, purposeful picture of the origin of everything we see. According to Genesis, our Lord turned on the lights, not with the flip of a switch, but with the echo of a powerful word. He simply said, "Let it be." And it was.

Meditate

In what ways do you reflect the attributes of the Creator, the One who created you in His image?

Demonstrate

Memorize Genesis 1:1 and say it often throughout the week.

Monday

Read Genesis 9:1–17

According to the National Geographic Society, the cheetah can go from 0 miles per hour to 60 in only three seconds. The only way I move 60 miles per hour is behind the steering wheel of my Chevy. I also learned from National Geographic that female cheetahs give birth to three cubs at a time. In the human realm, twins are a rarity; triplets are almost impossible to imagine.

Cheetahs might seem superior to humans in speed and reproduction, but God didn't task them with filling the earth with a multitude of Chesters. He chose *people* to fill it because only humans were created with souls and the ability to follow the One who created them. Noah received marching orders to reproduce and to share with a new generation the promise of life through God. God values humankind.

Meditate

What can you do to encourage your friends and family to come to faith in God?

Demonstrate

Write Matthew 5:16 on a sticky note and put it on your bathroom mirror as a reminder of God's purpose for you

Tuesday

Read Exodus 20:8–11

Sometimes you have to work really hard on Sunday. I first discovered this truth as a senior in high school, overwhelmed by a looming research paper, yet dutifully sitting in church in my dress and uncomfortable shoes. Even with all of my diligence and devotion to godly matters, thoughts of my assignment still crept in. Before I knew it I was making mental outlines and considering killer statistics that backed up my points. Suddenly, Sunday wasn't holy.

The words of Exodus 20:8 don't simply mean that we should remember the Sabbath day like we would remember to brush our teeth or remember to show up for school on Monday. We are to *earnestly* remember the Sabbath day, to set it apart as holy. Make it a point to make Jesus the point of your Sunday.

Meditate

What does it mean to keep the Sabbath holy? What does this commandment permit or forbid?

Demonstrate

Don't beat yourself up spiritually when you fail to achieve perfect focus on Christ on a given Sunday. When you get distracted, take a deep breath and refocus your thoughts on Him.

The Bible is held in highest esteem as teens read Scripture and devotional thoughts that extend the big ideas from the week's study.



Adults and teens are studying the same Scripture each day, leading to natural family conversations about God's Word.

Wednesday

Read Psalm 8:5-9

I recently ate lunch with a friend at the top of a tall, glass building. The view was incredible. As I gazed down on the fragile-looking, ant-sized people scurrying about on the sidewalk below, I wondered if my view was similar to God's as He looks down on His chosen creation. Surely we seem vulnerable and insignificant.

The psalmist experienced a similar sense of wonder as he considered God's handiwork all around him. As he described God's viewpoint, though, he depicted something much different from what I had imagined. When our Creator gazes upon us, He doesn't see weak little creatures; He sees royalty. Although even a cardboard Burger King crown is more than we have earned, the God who hung the moon and calls the stars by name gives His people glory and honor.

Meditate

How do these verses define your real worth? How does this definition differ from the way the world values you?

Demonstrate

Commit to viewing and treating yourself and those around you as what you are: crown jewels of our Heavenly Father.

Notes:

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Thursday

Read Psalm 136:3-9

You've probably sung some "camp songs," like "Michael, Row the Boat Ashore" or "Kumbaya," with a repeated phrase that may or may not have formed an earworm in your brain. Maybe Psalm 136 was a camp song! Imagine singing verses 3-9 around the campfire as you looked up at the stars. The repeated phrase certainly drilled home a vital truth for them (and us) to remember.

This psalm serves as a history lesson for the children of Israel, beginning at Creation. God's design is evident in the wonders of the sun, moon, and stars. We continue to marvel at the expanse of the universe and continue to rejoice in God's enduring mercy to us—as high as the heavens are above the earth (Psalm 103:11).

Meditate

When was the last time you got a good glimpse of the stars away from the city lights? How did they make you feel?

Demonstrate

God is the Designer of the universe. What song would you sing or play to honor Him?

Friday

Read Ephesians 4:17-32

One day I absentmindedly set a hot coffee mug on our perfect oak table. It left a wicked white steam ring. Devastated, I turned to Google and found an "easy" three-step solution to strip away the mark. It took three days and ended in bloody knuckles, but I am happy to report I successfully restored the table to its former glory.

When God created people, He called us "very good." And we were. Then, life in a fallen world happened. Although Jesus saved us by grace, we must work alongside Him to strip away the sin in our lives, most of which begins in our minds and spews out of our mouths. It's no easy process. It hurts, but God's glory is worth it.

Meditate

In what ways can your most stubborn "stains" (sin) be traced back to wrong thinking?

Demonstrate

Check out 2 Corinthians 10:5 and define what it means to take your thoughts captive and to be in control over them.



Teens have a daily question to consider and personalize the application of Scripture truth.

A next step to continue spiritual growth is suggested for teens each day.

A little journaling space or the start for a prayer list—or just a place to doodle—is available for teens each week.