

## WHAT IS A H.E.A.R. JOURNAL?

*A H.E.A.R. Journal is a simple way to help you read the Bible with the goal of applying it to your life.* This method promotes reading the Bible with a life-transforming purpose. Our focus should not be just checking off the boxes on our daily reading schedule, but on hearing from God and having our lives transformed by His Word. By asking four simple questions, we can begin to understand and apply any passage of scripture to our lives. In addition, journaling is a great discipline, because it helps us retain three times more of what we read.

There is not a set amount of H.E.A.R. Journals that you must do each week, but the goal with this discipline (as with the others) is to improve as time goes on. Consider how often you currently journal and do "+1" of that. If you have never journaled, start off by doing 1-2 per week. If you already journal occasionally, start off by doing 3-4 per week. The hope is that as you become more confident in this discipline and begin to experience its benefit in your life, you will want to increase this number throughout the year.

As you work through your Bible reading plan this week, create a H.E.A.R. Journal by using the below outline.

### **HIGHLIGHT:**

Highlight a main verse or two from the passage you're studying and write them down here. Include the book, chapter, and verse(s).

### **EXPLAIN:**

Explain what this passage of Scripture means. What's the author's intended meaning in the context of the passage? What do we learn about God in these verses? What do we learn about people?

### **APPLY:**

Write down how the verse/passage applies to us today. Is there an example for us to follow? Is there a command for us to obey? Is there a sin for us to avoid?

### **RESPOND:**

Write down a prayer and an action as a result of what you have just studied. How does God want YOU to respond to what you've just read? Be specific and carry it out.

# SAMPLE H.E.A.R. JOURNAL

**PASSAGE:** GENESIS 1-2

**DATE:** DECEMBER 27, 2020

## **HIGHLIGHT:**

**Gen. 1:26-27** - "Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness... So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them."

**Gen. 1:31** - "And God saw everything that He had made, and behold, it was very good."

## **EXPLAIN:**

Genesis 1-2 tells of how God created the world and everything in it. God made everything — light, water, land, fruits, vegetables, plants, the sun, the moon, the stars, animals of all kinds, all that exists — and everything God made was very good! The greatest of all of God's creation was man and woman, who were made in His very image, after His likeness. These verses show us how God originally created the world to be (before sin) and it is a beautiful picture! These verses teach us so much about who God is and what God is like. God is good and all that He does is good. He is powerful and can do anything He pleases (just by speaking a word). These verses also teach us a lot about humans. Humans are very special to God and are very valuable in His sight.

## **APPLY:**

Because God is all-good and all-powerful (He literally speaks and things happen), we can and should trust Him with everything in our lives. We can trust Him, because He has power over everything and because we know He will always do what is good and right. I sometimes struggle with being anxious about the things that seem outside of my control, but that's when I need to remind myself of God's goodness and power over all things.

Because all people are created in God's image and are very special to Him, we should take great care in how we treat others. We must always remember that every person we come across are special creations of the God who made everything. There are some people in my life who are hard to love, but I need to remember that they are also human beings created in the image of God and God has called me to love them just as He loves me.

## **RESPOND:**

Father, thank you for creating the world and everything in it. Thank you for making me! I know that you are good and have power over everything, including everything in my life. Help me to trust you with the things in my life that are outside of my control. Help me to remember that even though they're outside of my control, they're not outside of yours. Thank you for my family, my church family, my neighbors, my friends, and my co-workers. I know that you have made each and every one of them and that they are special in your sight. Help me to love them as fellow image bearers, as those who are your special creations. Help me to love all people in the world in that way. Please forgive me for the times I've not loved others as you have called me to. This week, provide me with opportunities to love and serve others. Open up doors for me to show others how great and awesome you are. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.