

[pocket]
DISCIPLE

Seven Experiences with Jesus



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KINGDOM  HEART
PUBLISHING

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*To Jen,
who inspires me to make the message
of being a disciple of Jesus count
where it matters most.*

Pocket Disciple: Seven Experiences with Jesus.

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Pocket Disciple isn't a typical book.

It's relational.



Use it one-on-one,



or with a small group of friends.

And watch what happens.



WHAT IS *POCKET DISCIPLE*?

Pocket Disciple is a simple, experiential guide for growing relationships centered on following Jesus together. As you go through these experiences, you will learn a reproducible way to encounter Jesus while gathering in groups that follow him together.

HOW TO USE *POCKET DISCIPLE*

Pocket Disciple is a tool—a tool to facilitate experiences. Hang out with some friends. Grab a drink or some food. Read through each chapter and talk about it together. It will be fun and help you grow your relationship with God and each other. After you're finished, grab some more people who could benefit from this kind of experience.

Great things can happen as you gather with others and share the insights God gives you. Interacting with others creates a spiritual momentum that can transform entire communities and beyond.

You can go through *Pocket Disciple* in as little as a few hours. Or you can go through it in a series of short meetings over seven days. Use it in a way that works best for you.

WHY USE THE BIBLE?

The Bible is a very creative and powerful book. Over thousands of years, God inspired different people to write down events, stories, songs, prophetic visions, and wise advice. The collected writings in the Bible are often referred to as God's Word or the Scriptures. Throughout Scripture, we see the thoughts and character of a God who loves you and desires a close relationship with you. At the center of God's Word, is the story of the One sent to personify his love perfectly—Jesus. The following experiences will lead you on a journey with Jesus, using sections of God's Word as a guide.



FIRST EXPERIENCE [change]

"The kingdom of God is near! Change how you think and believe this good news." — Jesus, Mark 1:14

GOAL

Open yourself to the kind of change Jesus spoke of.

A NEW KIND OF LIFE

Have you ever been in the midst of a confusing or challenging situation, when suddenly, your perspective totally changes—when suddenly, you clearly see what action you should take?

Jesus spoke a lot about change. When it comes to our lives, each of us can benefit from a fresh perspective in how we relate to God and the world around us. Whether you've been religious your whole life, or whether you've never really given much thought to spiritual matters, Jesus says anyone can experience a new kind of life through Him.

So, how can we experience the kind of change Jesus spoke of? What is this “Good News” of God’s Kingdom all about?

Let’s start with a story about Jesus and his encounter with someone who was spiritually curious. Read and discuss together as you open your heart to experiencing Jesus in a new and meaningful way.

READ AND DISCUSS

Underline any phrases that catch your attention.

There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee. After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. “Rabbi,” he said, “we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you.”

Jesus replied, “I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God.”

“What do you mean?” exclaimed Nicodemus. “How can an old man go back into his mother’s womb and be born again?”

Jesus replied, “I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. Humans can reproduce only human life, but the

Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. So don’t be surprised when I say, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can’t tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can’t explain how people are born of the Spirit.”

“How are these things possible?” Nicodemus asked.

Jesus replied, “You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don’t understand these things? I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won’t believe our testimony. But if you don’t believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven. And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.” — *John 3:1-17*

DISCUSS

- *What words or phrases caught your attention?*
- *How did Jesus speak about change in this story?*
- *What Good News do you see?*

GOING DEEPER

Underline and discuss the Good News in each section.

He came into the very world he created, but the world didn't recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God. — *John 1:10-13*

"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give them a rich and satisfying life." — *John 10:10*

We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, with undeserved kindness, declares that we are righteous. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood. — *Romans 3:22*

Christ arrives right on time to make this happen... God put his love on the line for us by offering his Son in sacrificial death... Now that we are set right with God by means of this sacrificial death, the consummate blood sacrifice, there is no longer a question of being at odds with God in any way. If, when we were at our worst, we were put on friendly terms with God by the sacrificial death of his Son, now that we're at our best, just think of how our lives will expand and deepen by means of his resurrection life! Now that we have actually received this amazing friendship with God, we are no longer content to simply say it in plodding prose. We sing and shout our praises to God through Jesus, the Messiah!

— *Romans 5:5-11 (The Message)*

For if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. — *Romans 10:9-10 (NIV)*

Even before He made the world, God loved us and chose us in Christ to be holy and without fault in His eyes. God decided in advance to adopt us into his own family by bringing us to himself through Christ Jesus. This is what He wanted to do, and it gave Him great pleasure... For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago. — *Ephesians 1:4-5; 2:10*

MAKE IT PERSONAL

As simple as it sounds, this new beginning starts by changing your way of thinking (repenting) and believing the Good News of Jesus' life, death, and resurrection. Personally. Wholeheartedly. Unashamedly. Jesus is the one who works the change in us—we simply trust him to do it. You can experience it, no matter who you are or what you've done.

DISCUSS

- *Do you want to open yourself to the kind of change Jesus spoke of?*
- *Are you willing to repent and believe the Good News of Jesus?*



When Jesus announced the arrival of God's Kingdom, his first instruction was, "Repent and believe this Good News." Repent literally means, "to change the way you think." Repentance is changing the way you think about God and your life—past, present, and future. Similar to how a caterpillar goes through a metamorphosis as it changes into a butterfly, we can change internally, and become centered on following Jesus.

ACTION

You can pray something like this together:

"Jesus, I want today to be a new beginning for me—a metamorphosis, a change. I'm choosing today to change my way of thinking about you and believe the Good News of your Kingdom. I believe you are the Son of God who came to forgive me, restore my relationship with God the Father, and give me eternal life. Today, I become your disciple. I want to follow you and learn from you. I believe you came to earth, performed miracles, died, and came back to life. Thank you for the gift of eternal life you are giving me today. Thank you for forgiving me and healing me from every wrong thing I've ever done or experienced in my past. Thank you for the change you are beginning in me today. Lead me into the kind of life you have ahead for me."

If you took this step with Jesus, you made a great decision. Congratulations!

You might jot down the date and any other thoughts you'd like to remember here:

The following pages will continue to guide you through experiences that will help you grow in your new life with Jesus.

GIVE IT AWAY

Sharing with others what you've received from God is the greatest blessing.

Who do you know who needs to hear what you learned from God in this section?

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES

To read more on this topic, you can look up:

Luke 24 | John 14:1-14 | John 17:1-21 | Acts 2:32-41
Acts 17:24-31 | Romans 5 | 2 Corinthians 5:18-21
Ephesians 1 and 2 | Colossians 1

Other Scriptures:



SECOND EXPERIENCE [water]

*"Here's water. Why can't I be baptized?" – Acts 8:36
(The Message)*

GOAL

Discover what baptism is all about.

FOLLOW-UP

Did you share with someone else what you learned from Jesus? How did it go?

A NEW IDENTITY

Jesus often used symbols and parables to illustrate deeper truths.

Baptism is one of the few explicit "rituals" Jesus gave us. This experience is symbolic of the spiritual transformation Jesus makes in our life.

When a caterpillar goes into a cocoon, it leaves an old identity behind. As it emerges from the cocoon as a butterfly, its old life is gone. A new life begins. Baptism is like that. It is an illustration of a person emerging out of their old life

and realizing their new identity as a beloved son or daughter of God.

For many people, baptism is a totally new experience. For others, being baptized as an adult is like a personal “renewal” of a Christian tradition in their family. Regardless of your family’s spiritual tradition, you can experience baptism in a way that honors your family and propels you onward in your new identity in Jesus.

Let’s start with a story that illustrates this powerful experience.

READ AND DISCUSS

Underline any phrases that catch your attention.

Later God’s angel spoke to Philip: “At noon today I want you to walk over to that desolate road that goes from Jerusalem down to Gaza.” He got up and went. He met an Ethiopian eunuch coming down the road. The eunuch had been on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem and was returning to Ethiopia, where he was minister in charge of all the finances of Candace, queen of the Ethiopians. He was riding in a chariot and reading the prophet Isaiah.

The Spirit told Philip, “Climb into the chariot.” Running up alongside, Philip heard the eunuch reading Isaiah and asked, “Do you understand what you’re reading?”

He answered, “How can I without some help?” and invited Philip into the chariot with him. The passage he was reading was this:

As a sheep led to slaughter, and quiet as a lamb being sheared, He was silent, saying nothing. He was mocked and put down, never got a fair trial. But who now can count his kin since he’s been taken from the earth?

The eunuch said, “Tell me, who is the prophet talking about: himself or some other?” Philip grabbed his chance. Using this passage as his text, he preached Jesus to him.

As they continued down the road, they came to a stream of water. The eunuch said, “Here’s water. Why can’t I be baptized?” He ordered the chariot to stop. They both went down to the water, and Philip baptized him on the spot. When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of God suddenly took Philip off, and that was the last the eunuch saw of him. But he didn’t mind. He had what he’d come for and went on down the road as happy as he could be. — *Acts 8:26-39 (The Message)*

GOING DEEPER

Read, underline, and discuss.

God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of it. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said,

“The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”

“Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. — *Acts 2:32-41 (NIV)*

“I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” — *Matthew 28:18-20*

DISCUSS

- *How did the people in these stories respond after hearing the Good News of Jesus?*
- *Why do you think Jesus taught us to be baptized after becoming his followers?*

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Jesus is more concerned about our hearts than external rituals. Baptism is not just a ceremony; it’s something you experience with Jesus by faith.

Have you decided to change how you think and believe the Good News? Are you ready to experience baptism?

If you have any questions or concerns about being baptized, be open with God and each other.



ACTION

Any follower of Jesus can baptize someone. If you're going through this book with someone who wants you to baptize them, go ahead. You have permission!

Set a time and place to be baptized. (If appropriate, you can do it right now.) You might use a pool, hot tub, bathtub, etc.

Is there a way to honor and include your friends and family in your baptism? If so, invite them to the celebration!

GIVE IT AWAY

Sharing with others what you've received from God is the greatest blessing.

Who do you know who needs to hear what you learned from God in this section?

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES

To read more on this topic, you can look up:

Acts 16:16-34 | Acts 22:1-16 | Romans 6:1-14

Colossians 2:1-15 | Peter 3:18-22

Other Scriptures:

THIRD EXPERIENCE [fire]

"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

— Luke 3:16

GOAL

Recognize and receive the Holy Spirit.

FOLLOW-UP

Who did you tell about the things you experienced in the last section? How did it go?

A POWERFUL BLAZE

There is one God. God reveals himself in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

When Jesus ascended to heaven, he didn't leave us alone. He promised he would send the Holy Spirit to be with us.

You've probably heard the phrase, "spreading like wildfire." The Holy Spirit is like that—a powerful blaze that will propel you forward in God's purpose for your life and the planet.

God sends the Holy Spirit to empower you, encourage you, lead you, teach you, and bless you with spiritual gifts. Some people experience gifts of the Holy Spirit the same day they begin following Jesus. For others, it is a more gradual experience. Sometimes gifts are received later, during specific moments.

Let's look at a few stories about people experiencing the Holy Spirit.

READ AND DISCUSS

Underline any phrases that catch your attention.

Saul was right there, congratulating the killers.

That set off a terrific persecution of the church in Jerusalem. The believers were all scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. All, that is, but the apostles. Good and brave men buried Stephen, giving him a solemn funeral—not many dry eyes that day!

And Saul just went wild, devastating the church, entering house after house after house, dragging men and women off to jail. Forced to leave home base, the followers of Jesus all became missionaries. Wherever they were scattered, they preached the Message about Jesus. Going down to a Samaritan city, Philip proclaimed

the Message of the Messiah. When the people heard what he had to say and saw the miracles, the clear signs of God's action, they hung on his every word. Many who could neither stand nor walk were healed that day. The evil spirits protested loudly as they were sent on their way. And what joy in the city!

Previous to Philip's arrival, a certain Simon had practiced magic in the city, posing as a famous man and dazzling all the Samaritans with his wizardry. He had them all, from little children to old men, eating out of his hand. They all thought he had supernatural powers, and called him "the Great Wizard." He had been around a long time and everyone was more or less in awe of him.

But when Philip came to town announcing the news of God's kingdom and proclaiming the name of Jesus Christ, they forgot Simon and were baptized, becoming believers right and left! Even Simon himself believed and was baptized. From that moment he was like Philip's shadow, so fascinated with all the God-signs and miracles that he wouldn't leave Philip's side.

When the apostles in Jerusalem received the report that Samaria had accepted God's Message, they sent Peter and John down to pray for them to receive the Holy Spirit. Up to this point they had only been baptized in the name of the Master Jesus; the Holy Spirit

hadn't yet fallen on them. Then the apostles laid their hands on them and they did receive the Holy Spirit.
— Acts 8:1-17 (*The Message*)

DISCUSS

- *What do you see about the Holy Spirit from these Scriptures?*

READ AND DISCUSS

Underline any phrases that catch your attention.

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the interior regions until he reached Ephesus, on the coast, where he found several believers. “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?” he asked them.

“No,” they replied, “we haven’t even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

“Then what baptism did you experience?” he asked.

And they replied, “The baptism of John.”

Paul said, “John’s baptism called for repentance from sin. But John himself told the people to believe in the one who would come later, meaning Jesus.”

As soon as they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then when Paul laid his hands

on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in other tongues and prophesied. There were about twelve men in all. — Acts 19:1-7

DISCUSS

- *What do you see about the Holy Spirit from these Scriptures?*

GOING DEEPER

Read, underline, and discuss.

“And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn’t looking for him and doesn’t recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you.” — John 14:16-17

That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.” Then he breathed on them and said, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”
— John 20:19-22

In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen. After his suffering, he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God. On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?”

He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”
— *Acts 1:1-8 (NIV)*

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is

no law against these things! Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit’s leading in every part of our lives.

— *Galatians 5:22-25*

Follow the way of love and eagerly desire the gifts of the Spirit, especially the gift of prophecy.

— *I Corinthians 14:1 (NIV)*

MAKE IT PERSONAL

How Can I Receive the Holy Spirit?

“So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

“Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” — *Luke 11:9-13 (NIV)*

You can receive the Holy Spirit by simply asking with a surrendered heart. People sometimes ask for the Holy Spirit while another follower of Jesus places their hands on them and prays for them.

DISCUSS

- *Do you want God to fill you with the Holy Spirit?*

ACTION

Pray to receive the Holy Spirit. You can pray something like this out loud together:

“Father, you promise to give the Holy Spirit to all those who ask you. I want the power of your Holy Spirit in my life. I desire the fruit of the Holy Spirit. I desire gifts from the Holy Spirit. I ask you for them. I ask you to fill me with the Holy Spirit.”

Be still and wait for a few moments. Focus on Jesus and God the Father’s love for you. You may receive a picture in your mind that is inspired by the Holy Spirit. If you feel something stirring inside you, pray out loud. It may be a prayer, a prophecy (a word from God), tongues (speaking in another language), or a strong sense of peace and closeness to God. You may feel something or you may not. Sometimes people experience

more tangible manifestations of the Holy Spirit at a later time. Don’t be afraid—God will only give good gifts to his children!

GIVE IT AWAY

Sharing with others what you’ve received from God is the greatest blessing.

Who do you know who needs to hear what you learned from God in this section?

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES

To read more on this topic, you can look up:

Luke 3:15-16 | Luke 24:35-49 | John 14:26

John 16:12-15 | Acts 1 and 2 | Acts 10

Romans 8:15-16 | Romans 8:2 | I Corinthians 2:1-5

I Corinthians 12, 13, & 14 | Galatians 5:22-26

Ephesians 1:13-14

Other Scriptures:



FOURTH EXPERIENCE [tell]

“Go home to your own people. Tell them your story....”

— Jesus, Mark 5 (*The Message*)

GOAL

Tell your spiritual story in meaningful ways to others.

FOLLOW-UP

Who did you tell about the things you experienced in the last section? How did it go?

YOUR PERSONAL STORY

The New Testament provides many examples of how one person’s encounter with Jesus can inspire many others to follow him.

Jesus wants his message told to every nation. He gave people instructions for how to spread this message to others—it is the greatest news the world has ever heard. However, some ways of sharing this wonderful news are better than others. How you bring the message is almost as important as the message itself.

Your personal story for how you are encountering Jesus is powerful. Rather than debating or arguing, sharing your personal story is one of the most effective ways to connect with and tell others about Jesus.

In this chapter, you will write out your personal story. You will be challenged to consider strategically, “Who does God want me to tell my story to?”

READ AND DISCUSS

Underline any phrases that catch your attention.

They arrived on the other side of the sea in the country of the Gerasenes. As Jesus got out of the boat, a madman from the cemetery came up to him. He lived there among the tombs and graves. No one could restrain him—he couldn’t be chained, couldn’t be tied down. He had been tied up many times with chains and ropes, but he broke the chains, snapped the ropes. No one was strong enough to tame him. Night and day he roamed through the graves and the hills, screaming out and slashing himself with sharp stones.

When he saw Jesus a long way off, he ran and bowed in worship before him—then bellowed in protest, “What business do you have, Jesus, Son of the High

God, messing with me? I swear to God, don't give me a hard time!" (Jesus had just commanded the tormenting evil spirit, "Out! Get out of the man!")

Jesus asked him, "Tell me your name."

He replied, "My name is Mob. I'm a rioting mob." Then he desperately begged Jesus not to banish them from the country.

A large herd of pigs was browsing and rooting on a nearby hill. The demons begged him, "Send us to the pigs so we can live in them." Jesus gave the order. But it was even worse for the pigs than for the man. Crazed, they stampeded over a cliff into the sea and drowned.

Those tending the pigs, scared to death, bolted and told their story in town and country. Everyone wanted to see what had happened. They came up to Jesus and saw the madman sitting there wearing decent clothes and making sense, no longer a walking mad-house of a man.

Those who had seen it told the others what had happened to the demon-possessed man and the pigs. At first they were in awe—and then they were upset, upset over the drowned pigs. They demanded that Jesus leave and not come back.

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the demon-delivered man begged to go along, but he wouldn't let him. Jesus said, "Go home to your own people. Tell them your story—what the Master did, how he had mercy on you." The man went back and began to preach in the Ten Towns area about what Jesus had done for him. He was the talk of the town. — *Mark 5 (The Message)*

DISCUSS

- *What do you see about Jesus in this story?*
- *What do you see about people?*
- *Who did Jesus want the man to tell his story to?*
- *How did his story affect the rest of his city?*

GOING DEEPER

Read, underline, and discuss.

Later [Jesus] selected seventy and sent them ahead of him in pairs to every town and place where he intended to go. He gave them this charge:

"What a huge harvest! And how few the harvest hands. So on your knees; ask the God of the Harvest to send harvest hands.

"On your way! But be careful—this is hazardous work. You're like lambs in a wolf pack.

"Travel light. Comb and toothbrush and no extra luggage.

"Don't loiter and make small talk with everyone you meet along the way.

"When you enter a home, greet the family, 'Peace.' If your greeting is received, then it's a good place to stay. But if it's not received, take it back and get out. Don't impose yourself.

"Stay at one home, taking your meals there, for a worker deserves three square meals. Don't move from house to house, looking for the best cook in town.

"When you enter a town and are received, eat what they set before you, heal anyone who is sick, and tell them, 'God's kingdom is right on your doorstep!'

"When you enter a town and are not received, go out in the street and say, 'The only thing we got from you is the dirt on our feet, and we're giving it back. Did you have any idea that God's kingdom was right on your doorstep?' Sodom will have it better on Judgment Day than the town that rejects you."
— *Luke 10:1-12 The Message*

And if someone asks about your Christian hope, always be ready to explain it. But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear. Then if

people speak against you, they will be ashamed when they see what a good life you live because you belong to Christ. — *1 Peter 3:15-16*

DISCUSS

- *What insights about sharing the message of Jesus do you see from these verses?*

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Your personal story for how you are encountering Jesus is important. It doesn't need to be exaggerated or be like anyone else's. It just needs to be genuine.

ACTION

1) Take 5-10 minutes to write your personal story with Jesus. Space is provided in the back of this book. Share briefly how you are encountering God at this stage of your journey.

Here are some prompts to help you as you write:

- *What are a few characteristics of your life before you began encountering Jesus?*
- *What did you discover about Jesus that inspired you to follow Him?*
- *How do you see Jesus making a difference in your life now?*

2) Practice telling your story out loud to each other a few times.

3) Who do you think Jesus may want you to tell your story to?

GIVE IT AWAY

Sharing with others what you've received from God is the greatest blessing.

Who do you know who needs to hear what you learned from God in this section?

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES:

To read more on this topic, you can look up:

Matthew 7:6 | Matthew 10:5-20 | Luke 9:1-6

John 4:1-42 | John 9 | Acts 22 | Acts 26:1-23

II Peter 1:16-21

Other Scriptures:



FIFTH EXPERIENCE [love]

"So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." — Jesus, John 13:34-35

GOAL

Experience God's love and express love to others.

FOLLOW-UP

Who did you tell about the things you experienced in the last section? How did it go?

CONTAGIOUS LOVE

You could spend the rest of your life searching out the depths of what it means to love. Scripture sums it up this way: "God is love." (1 John 4:8).

God's love is the most powerful force in the universe. God created the world through love. Because of love, God sent Jesus. Think of it— if God loves us so much that he would become a human and die for people who rejected and cursed him, how much more does God want

to pour out his love on those of us who have become his children?

Realizing how much God truly and unconditionally loves you is a secret to discovering how to live with great love. As God's love captures your heart, it inspires you to love him and love others in return.

READ AND DISCUSS

Underline any phrases that catch your attention.

One of the Pharisees asked Jesus to have dinner with him, so Jesus went to his home and sat down to eat. When a certain immoral woman from that city heard he was eating there, she brought a beautiful alabaster jar filled with expensive perfume. Then she knelt behind him at his feet, weeping. Her tears fell on his feet, and she wiped them off with her hair. Then she kept kissing his feet and putting perfume on them.

When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, he would know what kind of woman is touching him. She's a sinner!"

Then Jesus answered his thoughts. "Simon," he said to the Pharisee, "I have something to say to you."

"Go ahead, Teacher," Simon replied.

Then Jesus told him this story: "A man loaned money to two people—500 pieces of silver to one and 50 pieces to the other. But neither of them could repay him, so he kindly forgave them both, canceling their debts. Who do you suppose loved him more after that?"

Simon answered, "I suppose the one for whom he canceled the larger debt."

"That's right," Jesus said. Then he turned to the woman and said to Simon, "Look at this woman kneeling here. When I entered your home, you didn't offer me water to wash the dust from my feet, but she has washed them with her tears and wiped them with her hair. You didn't greet me with a kiss, but from the time I first came in, she has not stopped kissing my feet. You neglected the courtesy of olive oil to anoint my head, but she has anointed my feet with rare perfume.

"I tell you, her sins—and they are many—have been forgiven, so she has shown me much love. But a person who is forgiven little shows only little love." Then Jesus said to the woman, "Your sins are forgiven."

The men at the table said among themselves, "Who is this man, that he goes around forgiving sins?"

And Jesus said to the woman, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace." — *Luke 7:36-50*

DISCUSS

- *What insights do you see about love in this story?*

GOING DEEPER

Read, underline, and discuss

My beloved friends, let us continue to love each other since love comes from God. Everyone who loves is born of God and experiences a relationship with God. The person who refuses to love doesn't know the first thing about God, because God is love—so you can't know him if you don't love. This is how God showed his love for us: God sent his only Son into the world so we might live through him. This is the kind of love we are talking about—not that we once upon a time loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to clear away our sins and the damage they've done to our relationship with God.

My dear, dear friends, if God loved us like this, we certainly ought to love each other. No one has seen God, ever. But if we love one another, God dwells deeply within us, and his love becomes complete in us—perfect love! — *1 John 4 (The Message)*

Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide,

how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.

— *Ephesians 3:17-19*

Jesus replied, “‘You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. A second is equally important: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments.” — *Matthew 22:34-40*

Since God chose you to be the holy people he loves, you must clothe yourselves with tenderhearted mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. Make allowance for each other's faults, and forgive anyone who offends you. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds us all together in perfect harmony. — *Colossians 3:12-14*

DISCUSS

- *Which ways of showing love do you find the most challenging?*
- *Which do you find the most exciting?*

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Spending Time with God

God is a good dad. He loves you and wants to spend time with you. When you spend time with God, he will often speak to you and encourage you. God can speak audibly, but he often speaks in a gentle, quiet voice within us:

“His Holy Spirit speaks to us deep in our hearts and tells us we are God’s children.” – Romans 8:16

As you spend time with God more frequently, you will learn to discern his voice from other thoughts and influences. Your love for him will grow and empower you to express love for others.

The One-thought Method

The One-thought Method is a tool you can use to interact with virtually any part of the Bible while spending time with God. (There are innumerable creative ways to spend time with him—this is just a tool to help you get started.)

- *Turn to a section of the Bible that interests you. If you don’t have one in mind, choose a verse from one of the previous pages.*

- *Underline and reflect on any words or phrases that catch your attention.*
- *What is one thought that comes to your mind that might be from God?*

Write it here:

Turn this thought into a prayer back to God. (For example: God says, “I love you.” You say, “Thank you for loving me. I love you too.”) Think of prayer as simply having a conversation with God. Write your prayer here:

ACTION

When you spend time with God, he will help you overflow in love for others. Practical ways of showing love include giving, forgiving, honoring, encouraging, etc.

1) Spend time with God using The One-thought Method as a guide (practice it now if you like). When and where will you spend time with God?

2) Love another person this week in a way that challenges you to grow in your love. Who do you sense God encouraging you to show love to?

GIVE IT AWAY

Sharing with others what you've received from God is the greatest blessing.

Who do you know who needs to hear what you learned from God in this section?

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES

To read more on this topic, you can look up:

Luke 7:36-50 | Luke 15 | John 15:9-17 | Acts 4:32-37
| Corinthians 13 | | Peter 1:22 | Other Scriptures:



SIXTH EXPERIENCE [gather]

"For where two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them." – Jesus, Matthew 18:20

GOAL

Remember Jesus with others over a meal.

FOLLOW-UP

Who did you tell about the things you experienced in the last section? How did it go?

BANDING TOGETHER

For a goose, perhaps the only thing better than flying is being able to fly in a flock. In a flock, a goose manifests the beautiful, God-designed imprint of its nature. A flock is a powerful picture of interdependence, where each individual goose is empowered to fly higher and farther than it could go alone.

In a similar way, one of the great joys of following Jesus is banding together with others who follow him.

As you journey through the experiences in *Pocket Disciple*, you are learning a pattern for encountering Jesus while gathering with others. Like a goose in a flock, you can repeat this pattern throughout your life as you follow Jesus with trusted friends and spiritual family.

In this section, you will learn a bit more about what Jesus has to say about “flocking together.” We’ll start with a story describing some of the experiences of the early disciples as they gathered together to remember Jesus.

READ AND DISCUSS

Underline any phrases that catch your attention.

That day about three thousand took him at his word, were baptized and were signed up. They committed themselves to the teaching of the apostles, the life together, the common meal, and the prayers.

Everyone around was in awe—all those wonders and signs done through the apostles! And all the believers lived in a wonderful harmony, holding everything in common. They sold whatever they owned and pooled their resources so that each person’s need was met.

They followed a daily discipline of worship in the Temple followed by meals at home, every meal a celebration, exuberant and joyful, as they praised God. People in general liked what they saw. Every day their number grew as God added those who were saved.
— Acts 2:41-47 (*The Message*)

DISCUSS

- What characteristics do you see for how the new followers of Jesus related to each other?
- What habits did they practice together?

GOING DEEPER

Read, underline, and discuss.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching. — *Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)*

“I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?”

Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me.” — *John 6:51-57 (NIV)*

When the time came, Jesus and the apostles sat down together at the table. Jesus said, “I have been very eager to eat this Passover meal with you before my suffering begins. For I tell you now that I won’t eat this meal again until its meaning is fulfilled in the Kingdom of God.”

Then he took a cup of wine and gave thanks to God for it. Then he said, “Take this and share it among yourselves. For I will not drink wine again until the Kingdom of God has come.”

He took some bread and gave thanks to God for it. Then he broke it in pieces and gave it to the disciples, saying, “This is my body, which is given for you. Do this to remember me.”

After supper he took another cup of wine and said, “This cup is the new covenant between God and his people—an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.” — *Luke 22:14-20*

DISCUSS

- *Why do you think Jesus taught his disciples to remember him over a meal with bread and wine?*

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Remembering Jesus with other disciples over a meal, or with bread and wine (or juice), is called “The Lord’s Supper” or “communion.” Sharing the Lord’s Supper together is a simple and meaningful way to remember Jesus with others whenever and wherever you gather. It doesn’t have to be somber or formal—just as in the Scripture example, it is a gathering of friends who love Jesus and each other.

ACTION

Practice The Lord's Supper together.

If you don't have bread and wine, just use whatever food or drink you can find. Take a few moments to remember Jesus together.

Here's a guide to help you:

1) Read the Scriptures about The Lord's Supper (on previous page) or another Scripture the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

2) One or more of you might say out loud (in your own words) what the body and blood of Christ mean and what they do for you.

3) Eat and drink together as a way of remembering Jesus.

4) Spend a few moments saying words of thanks to God. If you want to, sing a worship song or pray together for a few moments.

GROWING A GROUP

"Wherever two or three gather together as my followers, I am there among them." – Jesus, Matthew 18:20

Many times, followers of Jesus will gather together regularly to share the Lord's Supper, love each other, and follow God's words together. This is a church in its simplest form. When a group becomes too big for everyone to interact meaningfully, sometimes a group will decide to multiply into more groups.

Any follower of Jesus can start a group with their friends or family. When you gather together here are a few things you can do to grow a simple church community:

WORD – Read and discuss God's Word as the Holy Spirit leads you. Share each week the ways you are acting on those words. The seven chapters in Pocket Disciple are a good place to start.

WORSHIP – Spend time loving God out loud through prayer and worship.

FELLOWSHIP – Remember Jesus over a meal and drinks together. Have meaningful conversation. Share in the joys and challenges of each other's lives. Encourage one another.



GIVE IT AWAY

Sharing with others what you've received from God is the greatest blessing.

Who do you know who needs to hear what you learned from God in this section?

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES

To read more on this topic, you can look up:

John 6:47-58 | John 10:14-16 | I Corinthians 12:12-27

I Corinthians 14:26 | Colossians 3:16

Other Scriptures:

SEVENTH EXPERIENCE [90]

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations..."

— Jesus, Matthew 28:19

GOAL

Commit the Great Commission to memory.

FOLLOW-UP

Who did you tell about the things you experienced in the last section? How did it go?

GO MAKE DISCIPLES

Jesus came to earth. He healed the sick and set people free from demonic influences. He showed people how to truly love God and each other. He went to the cross. He rose again. He trained a group of disciples to continue his mission on the earth. Right before he ascended to heaven, he left his disciples with some important final words. These words are known as the "Great Commission."

As followers of Jesus, the Great Commission is our “standing order” for what God wants accomplished in the earth.

READ AND DISCUSS

Underline any phrases that catch your attention.

The Great Commission:

“I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”
— *Matthew 28:18-20*

DISCUSS

- *What does Jesus want us to do?*
- *Where does Jesus want us to make disciples?*
- *What should we teach new disciples to do?*

ACTION

Memorize the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

1) Write it out a few times (space is provided in the back of this book), or until you can say it by memory.

2) Practice saying it to each other from memory.

GOING DEEPER

Read, underline, and discuss.

“Come, be my disciples, and I will show you how to fish for people!” — *Matthew 4:19*

“As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.”
— *John 20:21*

“The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you...”
— *Luke 10:2-3 (NIV)*

This same Good News that came to you is going out all over the world. It is bearing fruit everywhere by changing lives, just as it changed your lives from the day you first heard and understood the truth about God’s wonderful grace. — *Colossians 1:6*

You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses. Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others. — *2 Timothy 2:2*

“And the Good News about the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, so that all nations will hear it; and then the end will come.”
— *Matthew 24:14*

HOW WILL IT ALL END?

Think of it—as a disciple of Jesus, you are connected to a multi-generational line of Jesus followers, stretching all the way back to the first century. The first disciples obeyed Jesus' command to make disciples, who made other disciples, and so on. You are part of God's story being written in the earth!

God has a plan for the world. Evil forces may try to resist God's plans. But in the end, God's plans for the nations will be accomplished. We don't know when God's plans will be completely fulfilled, but through the Great Commission, we do know what God wants us to do. Are you ready to accept your mission?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

Throughout *Pocket Disciple*, you've shared a series of experiences with at least one other person. You've focused on getting to know Jesus and responding to his words together. As you've grown in your relationship with Jesus, you've learned a simple and powerful way to go make other disciples.

DISCUSS

- *During your time of going through Pocket Disciple, what aspects have been the most influential for you?*
- *How have you seen God working through others in your group? How has this encouraged you?*
- *What do you think God wants to do with your group next?*

GIVE IT AWAY

Sharing with others what you've received from God is the greatest blessing.

What areas of your city have a need and openness to making new disciples?

Who do you know that would benefit from going through the seven experiences of Pocket Disciple?

Take a moment to pray for those God brings to mind. Look for an opportunity to ask them to go through *Pocket Disciple* with you. Jesus is sending you. Go make disciples!

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ABOUT ERIK

Erik's journeys to the First Nations people of North America dramatically influenced his passion and strategies for bringing Jesus-centered movements to those outside conventional Christendom. In 2010, he was adopted and named as a member of the Dakota Sioux nation.

As the founding leader of the Student Church Movement and the SCPX training experience, Erik has empowered next generation leaders around the world to multiply disciples and simple churches.

Erik's messages on the simplicity of Jesus' call to make disciples have been featured on platforms such as iDisciple by Family Christian Bookstores. He is a frequent consultant and trainer for churches, college ministries, and international missions organizations.

Erik and his wife, Jen, have four children. Their love for Jesus, family, and travel takes them on adventures together around the globe.

SHARE THE EXPERIENCE

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MY STORY

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