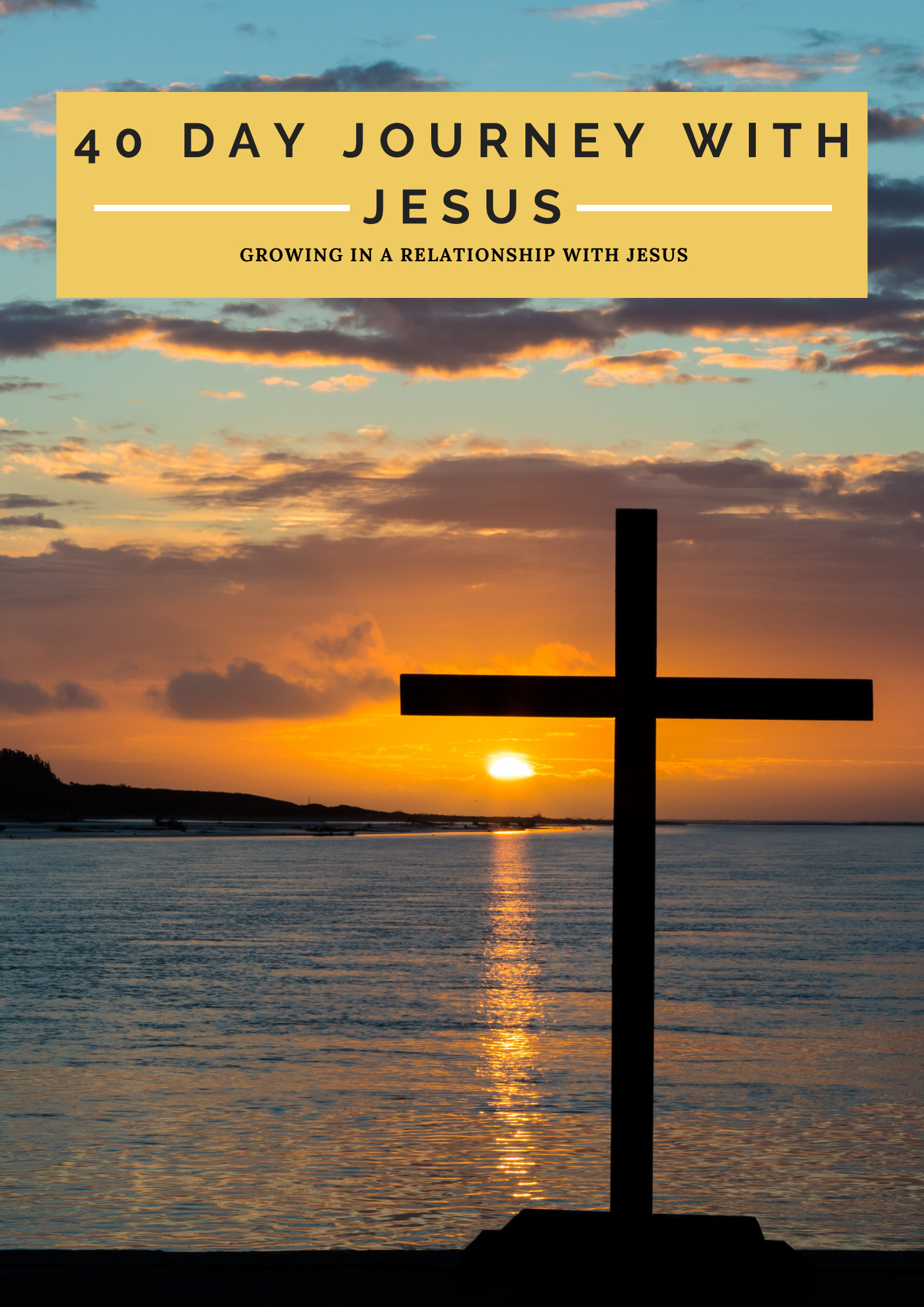


40 DAY JOURNEY WITH JESUS

GROWING IN A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS



WHAT JESUS WANTS YOU TO KNOW ABOUT HIM

Jesus wants you to know how much He loves you. He wants you to realize that He came to die to pay for your sin.

Yes, you are a sinner.

We all have been born with the curse of sin upon our lives. In the Bible, the Apostle Paul writes a letter to the Romans. In Chapter three and verse twenty-three (3:23) he shares the reality that "all have sinned and fallen short of being worthy of God's glory being shown upon them."

All of mankind is cursed with the sin virus because of the choice that was made in the Garden of Eden by the very first couple. Sin has a lot of symptoms, but the main symptom is self-centeredness.

This self-centered focus affects all our lives and relationships. But no relationship is more affected by our sin than our relationship with God.

He loves you so much and wants you to have a close, personal relationship with Him, but your sin keeps you from loving Him in return. Romans 5:8 tells us that "God demonstrates His love for us that while we were still sinners, Christ died for our sins." This truth is amazing! God loved us so much that He gave His only Son to pay the penalty for all our sins before we ever even acknowledged His love, our sin, and our need for a savior.

WHAT JESUS WANTS YOU TO KNOW ABOUT YOURSELF

We often times think that we can fix any problem we have in our lives. All it takes is a little hard work and some ingenuity and it will be fine. But you can't work your way into Heaven, and you cannot fix your sin problem. Every person born into this life is born with the sin virus in them. No matter how good of a person you think you are, without the antidote to overcome sin in your life, you are destined to an eternal death. Romans 6:23 tells of the wages of sin being death, but the gift of God is eternal life. No matter how good or nice you are it's not enough to overcome the sin virus you have in you from your birth. Jesus wants you to know that if you're outside of a relationship with Him, then

you are lost.

But because of God's love for you, He sent His Son Jesus to find you through His grace. That grace is the saving grace that He offered by taking your place on the cross. All humanity is sinful and lost, and separated from God. But God in His love gave His only Son to pay the price for all the sin of humanity. Jesus paid the wages for mankind's sin. For you to experience the benefits of this gift of grace, you must accept it. This acceptance is done through our acknowledgement of our sinfulness and our need for a Savior that leads us from being lost to being found by God's love.

WHAT JESUS WANTS TO DO IN YOUR LIFE

2 Corinthians 5:17 says that anyone who accepts Jesus as their Savior is a "new creation". Their old life of sinfulness is passed away and their life is new. Jesus wants to do something spectacular in your life. He wants to transform you into what you were created to be.

How does He do that? How do you think people are changed?

People are changed, or transformed, by transforming the way they think. Romans 12:2 tells us not to be conformed by the pattern of the world's thinking, but to be transformed, or changed, by renewing our minds to think like Christ. Paul writes in Romans 8:29 that God wants to conform us into the image and likeness of His Son, Jesus. Why?

That we may do His will, His good and

perfect will through our lives. How does God transform our minds so we think like Jesus?

Through studying the Bible, God's Word, and through the guidance of His Holy Spirit who resides in our lives. When we accept God's free gift of salvation as our own, God deposits His Holy Spirit into our hearts. It is through the work and presence of the Holy Spirit that God will open up the truth of the Bible to you. The more we study God's Word the more we begin to think like Him. The more our thinking is aligned with God's Word, then the truth of His Word becomes the convictions by which we live our lives. So our lives are transformed. God wants to do this in you. If you let Him, you will never regret it.

WHAT JESUS WANTS TO DO THROUGH YOU

Did you know that you were born for greatness? It is true. God created you unique. There is only one of you and He not only created you, but when you were lost in your sin, He gave His only Son, Jesus, to purchase you out of your sin. While transforming you into the likeness of Jesus, God has a divine purpose for you in this life. That purpose is simply to tell others of His love for them as well. You need to understand that there are people only you can reach in this life with this message of good news about God's love for them. Think of all the individuals with whom you would love to spend eternity. Can you list some?

Maybe your family, best friend, spouse, boyfriend or girlfriend, aunt or uncle, co-worker, or neighbor. There are so many people that need to hear of God's love for them and you are the best person to share that love with them. God wants to bring others to Himself through you.

Understand, you cannot save anyone, spiritually speaking, but you can introduce them to Jesus through your life.

How you live your faith, and how you speak, can draw others to want to know the Savior that has transformed your life.

WHAT IS YOUR PART IN THE TRANSFORMING PROCESS?

There are some who believe that they have no part or role in the transformational process that God wants to do in their lives, but there is a role that you play. By grace are we saved through faith, and not of ourselves, the Apostle Paul writes. God's grace through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross provide salvation, but transformation does require something from you... surrender, or submission. This is where you allow God to transform your life into something new. In Romans 12:1, the Apostle Paul tells us to present (submit or surrender) ourselves as a living sacrifice to God for transformation. This transformation is a change in the way that you think. How does God want you to think? He wants you to think like Christ. Philippians 2:5 says, *let, this mind be in you which is also in Christ Jesus.*

Some versions of the Bible use the word *attitude* instead of mind, but either word will work for the purpose of God because both words deal with our thinking. It is our thinking that determines our attitude, and we live out our attitude toward life. Our life is a sum of our thinking. The Bible tells us this *as a man thinks in his heart so is he* (Proverb 23:7). You change the way you think by changing what you think, *Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy-- meditate on these things* Philippians 4:8. You change how you think, by what you think. The best source for changing what you think about is found in the Bible.

LIVING A LIFE WORTHY OF YOUR NAMESAKE

Before you set out to live a life worthy of your namesake, which is Jesus the Christ, you must realize that you cannot accomplish such a worthy goal in your own strength and wisdom. You can only live such a life through the power and presence of God's Holy Spirit living within you. This is the reason it is so important to study the Bible. It is God's written Word and inside of it, from Genesis to Revelation, is understanding of God's Living Word, Jesus.

Determine in the next 40 days to:

- Read and study the Bible
- Journal about what God is showing you
- Pray everyday
- Fast one meal per day (your choice). But pray & read the Bible during that time you would normally eat
- Practice being a secret blessing toward someone else at least once per week
- Make gathering with other believers a high priority
- Slow down & rest. The sabbath is about resting
- Say the Lord's Prayer out loud everyday
- Praise God every day for your salvation
- Rejoice every day & celebrate the resurrection of Jesus & your assurance of Heaven
- Smile more

SCRIPTURES TO GET YOU STARTED

Jeremiah 29:11

Hebrews 12:2

Romans 8:28

John 3:16

Philippians 4:13

Proverbs 3:5-6

Romans 12: 1-2

Philippians 4:6-8

Matthew 28:19-20

Ephesians 2:8-9

Galatians 5:22-23

John 10:10

Galatians 2:20

1 John 1:9

Romans 3:23

John 14:6

Romans 5:8

Joshua 1:9

Isaiah 40:31

Romans 6:23

Isaiah 53:4-6

1 Peter 3:15

2 Timothy 3:16

Matthew 6:33

1 Peter 5:7

Ephesians 2:10

1 Corinthians 10:13

Matthew 11:28

Hebrews 11:1

2 Corinthians 12:9

Romans 10:9

2 Corinthians 5:17

Hebrews 13:5

2 Corinthians 12:9

Isaiah 41:10

Matthew 11:29

John 16:33

2 Timothy 1:7

2 Corinthians 5:21

Romans 15:13

John 11:25

Hebrews 11:6

John 5:24

Let these verses prompt you to study the context of them throughout the rest of the passage.

Good books to start a Bible study in are:

John

1 Timothy

2 Timothy.