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DATE STARTED: _____

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**“BEHOLD, THE FORMER
THINGS HAVE COME TO PASS,
AND NEW THINGS I NOW
DECLARE; BEFORE THEY
SPRING FORTH I TELL
YOU OF THEM.”**

ISAIAH 42:9

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GETTING STARTED

Human beings are nothing if not creatures of habit. We are drawn to routine. We expect the expected and when it doesn't happen we get frustrated and confused.

Have you ever noticed the result of something completely disrupting our expectations? When something so out of the ordinary happens that it shatters the status quo? It's absolute chaos. We don't know how to respond. But when the disruptor is God, it can be beautiful chaos.

God is the great redefiner. At the heart of what it means to know and experience God is the process of redefinition.

If you have recently gone through the study of *Redefined* with your church or youth group, you may feel like you've already learned a lot about how God redefined us and our lives. You may feel like you understand what it means to be new. You may even feel like you know that God called you to a purpose that's redefined.

But guess what? You're just getting started.

This book will take you on a four-week journey of going deeper into exactly what it means to have your entire life redefined by the Great Redefiner. Embrace this journey. Give it your best. Commit to sticking with this book until the end. It will only take a few minutes each day. And you'll find that your life will be richer as a result of spending such quality time in God's presence.

LET'S GET STARTED. LOOK AT THE NEXT PAGE TO LEARN HOW THIS BOOK WORKS.

HOW THIS BOOK WORKS

START WITH THIS ADVICE

Whether you're super-committed and read your Bible each day or struggle to read a few verses a couple of times a week, the key to sticking with this through four weeks is a routine. Try and work through this book at the same time each day, whether that's in the morning, after lunch, or before you go to bed. Block out a time each day to spend in this book, and then commit to sticking to it. **You'll find it's a lot easier to stay consistent that way.**

HAVE YOUR BIBLE OPEN

Resist the urge to ignore the spots where this book will tell you to read a passage of Scripture. This book is only a guide for *the Book*. **The close relationship with God that you want only happens by reading and doing what's in the Bible.** Have it open as you go through this book.

EACH WEEK IS STRUCTURED THE SAME, BUT IS REALLY DIFFERENT

Each week's content follows a pattern. **But, each day is different. And, there are a lot of different kinds of activities.** Some will take 3-5 minutes, some 10-15. Some will ask you to look at two or three passages of Scripture; some will ask you to think about a concept. The variety will make it easier to stick with and help you learn in different ways that are suited to you.

WHAT IF I MISS A DAY OF READING? OR THREE?

Don't give up. Take this at your pace. The goal is for you to grow closer to God and to have a faith-life that's more "real." If you miss a day or two . . . or four . . . don't throw in the towel. Pick this book back up and start where you left off. **You can do this.** And by doing it, you'll show the world that God makes an incredible difference in the lives of His followers. So, hang in there! You've got this.

Well, that's what you need to know to get started! **Turn the page to read the introduction to Week 1.**



INTRO WEEK ONE

Before starting Week 1, read this short introduction.

We know that God is in the business of redefinition. That He's taking what we thought was true about the world, and giving it new meaning, new color, and new life. He does this holy work in the small corners of our lives, and also on the stage of the universe with equal love and attention.

This first week, we're going to step into the basics: how God redefines everything and WHY that's important in the life of a believer. We'll look at why God created us and how living out of that purpose is the only way to life. We'll study how God redefines our reality and what it means to have true abundant life. And we won't stop there: we'll learn how our identity and who we are can only be defined by Christ, and how that allows us to participate in God's work of redemption.

IF YOU'RE READY TO GET STARTED, TURN TO PAGE 10 FOR WEEK 1, DAY 1.

WEEK ONE

DAY ONE

Read today's devotion below and answer the questions on page 11.

How would you define yourself? How would you define your life? Would you define yourself in terms of what you do? How good of a student you are? How athletic you are? How creative you are? Or maybe something you have done—something you just can't seem to leave in the past? Or perhaps you don't know how to define who you are because it has been lost in how other people see you. Does it all seem stagnant? Maybe you need a change. You are not alone.

In today's passage, God's people have lost their way and their identity. They need to be redefined. Take a moment to read Isaiah 42:9. God's people—the Israelites—have been in exile. Even though God had long before made a promise to bring His truth to the world through the Israelites, they had lost hope and turned to other false gods for fulfillment. Because of their sin, they had been exiled—sent out of the Promised Land. They are wondering if they will ever be restored back to relationship with their True God.

And God hears them—even though they have been unfaithful again and again. God tells them, “behold”! In other words, “listen up”! Everything is about to change. He reminds them that He has done everything He promised in the past, so He is trustworthy. And now, new things are coming. They won't be left to their own devices. They won't be defined by their unfaithfulness forever. The Israelites have hope again for a savior who is coming. A savior who will set all their wrongs right again. A savior who will take them home to the land He gave to them.

So our lives don't have to be defined by the world. We don't have to be defined by what our friends think or what college we get into or whether we are “_____” enough. We don't have to be defined by what we have done or something that was done to us. Christ has the power to redefine it all. He infuses the boring, predictable rhythms with new life. The sin and darkness lingering in the past? He exchanges them for new life. So listen up! He is doing a new thing in and through your life!

Read the following questions and use the space provided to write down your answers.

1. What are the things that currently define who you are?

2. Why is it so easy to fall into the ways the world defines you?

3. What in your life seems stagnant and predictable?

4. What might God want to shake up and redefine?

WEEK ONE

DAY TWO

What were we made to do? Read today's devotional to find out.

If you haven't asked the question yet, at some point you will. Maybe in the middle of an incredibly boring math lesson. "Why are we here"? Like, big picture—what is all of this for? The planets, the land and oceans, the trees and wildlife . . . you, me, and billions of people of all tribes, tongues, and nations. What were we all put on this giant spinning planet to do?

Take a moment to read Isaiah 43:6-7. God's people, the Israelites, have been far off—not hearing God and certainly not obeying Him. But God hasn't given up on them (though they have given Him plenty of reasons and opportunities). He knows they have a higher purpose and a deeper call, because He made them. Even just a few verses earlier, the Lord reminds them that He is the one who made them, redeemed them, and called them (43:1-2). They have forgotten why they exist and need to be reminded.

I don't know about you, but I need to be reminded of the truth more than I would like to admit. I forget why I'm here. I believe the lies that say I have to prove myself and prove my worth to the world around me. I believe them when I have forgotten why God made me, redeemed me, and called me, and that none of this is ultimately about me.

Maybe you have felt some of those things too. And if you haven't noticed, believing those lies steals your joy faster than you realize. We all want to be happy—to be filled with joy. That's not a bad thing. But we often take the wrong road, thinking a perfectly-crafted life will result in being perfectly happy. But when our happiness is centered on us, we will rarely be happy, certainly not for very long. But in surrendering our whole lives, in realizing that we were made to bring God glory, and not ourselves, we find the true joy of being obedient to the God who created us.

Every aspect of your life can bring God glory. Not just when you're doing "Christian things." All of it. Your school, your sports, how you interact with your friends and family. Every part of your life was meant to point to the God who made you, redeemed you and called you for His glory.

Take a look at the questions below and answer them in the spaces provided.

1. In what areas are you most tempted to live for your own glory?

2. How does remembering that you exist for God's glory redefine how you go about your daily life?

3. How can you bring Him glory while you are at school? With your family and friends? Thinking about your future?

WEEK ONE

DAY THREE

Go through today's devotional and think through the questions placed throughout.

Do you remember the first time you looked out the window of an airplane? Or if you've never flown, a time you looked out from a mountain to a vast expanse or out of a top floor window over a large city? You have a different perspective from high off the ground. That school bus that is usually twice as big as your car now looks like you could squash it like an insect. Not only can you see more, but you see a fuller picture, one you can't see at ground level.

This is the kind of reality-shifting change we experience in Christ. Paul talks about this in Ephesians 2:4-10. Go ahead and read it.

Everything has changed. For Paul, his entire reality moved from a persecutor and killer of Christians to a shepherd and evangelist. All of us were dead in our sin, with no way out. But, in God's mercy, He gave us life with Christ instead. The great shift for us as believers comes when we realize that the life we build with our own hands will never be enough, but the new life that Christ purchased for us is eternal. He's even planned the work He wants us to do in His Kingdom—not so we can earn His favor, but because He has already made us worthy by His blood.

Our perspective shifts when Christ gives us new life through Him. Outside of Christ we only have our perspective. In Christ, however, we have been raised up and seated with Him in the heavenly places. We can see the bigger picture; we are no longer dictated by only what we can see and hear and taste and touch. We have a bigger perspective, and we are a part of something much more significant than our own little reality (and newsflash, we aren't at the center of it all).

Is it scary to think about not being in control of your own life? Why is that?

With this new reality comes freedom to relinquish control of our lives. We like to think the more we can control, the better our lives will be. Jesus said He came so we could have life to the fullest—abundant life! I don't know about you, but I want whatever abundant life involves. But that means a shift in my reality. A shift from control to trust. When that happens, the abundance of eternal life doesn't wait until heaven; it starts right now.

What are the hardest parts of your own life and reality that are the most difficult to hand over to God? How do you try to control those things?

Take a moment to sit in silence with God. Ask Him to help you trust Him enough to let go of these things. If that seems too big, start small. Write down any thoughts or reflections you have.

How might an abundant life in Christ look different from the world's definition of it?

WEEK ONE

DAY FOUR

Go through today's devotional and think through the questions placed throughout.

"Remember who you are." Have your parents ever said this to you, as you're walking out the door or heading off with friends? If so, you probably rolled your eyes and thought, "I know, I know." What do your parents mean when they say this? They are trying to remind you to act in accordance with your identity. They don't want you to be swayed by temptations, or be led into situations where you feel pressured to be someone you aren't.

That is really what Paul is saying to his fellow Christians in Rome. Go ahead and read Romans 8:14-17.

The Roman Christians were very familiar with slavery. Many of the Jews had been brought to Rome as slaves. They lived with only a small hope that they would one day earn their way out of their status as slaves. The language and mentality would have been all-too-familiar for many reading Paul's words. But the good news of the Gospel is that when we choose to follow Christ, it means we are adopted into His family. The Spirit in us gives us the ability to cry out to our Father. The Spirit gives us access to God that we did not have before we were adopted into His family. We are freed from all the other things that bound us and defined us before.

When we remember who we are—sons and daughters of God—and we follow the leading of His Spirit who lives in us, our lives follow in obedience. Our tendency to want to "earn" our right standing with God and others falls away, and there is no longer fear of being good enough or measuring up to some standard. All that fear was done away with when you were adopted into God's family. You were chosen. You were brought home. Now you get all the access, confidence, and benefits that come with being God's child.

In what ways or areas of your life is it most challenging to live out your God-given identity?

The way we continue to live out our identity as sons and daughters is to be reminded. It's why we need to live in community with other believers who can remind us of the truth—found in God's word—when the lies seem easier to believe.

What lies do you believe about your identity?

If we forget who we are, then we will spend our lives being defined by other people, our past, our family, our abilities, our religious resume, or any number of experiences. But who you are in Christ is the most important and most definitive thing about you.

What is the truth of Christ's gospel and how has it redefined your identity?

Take a moment to remember who you are in Christ. Write down five true statements, based on scripture, about who God says you are in Him.

WEEK ONE

DAY FIVE

What is your purpose? Jump into today's devotional to find out, then answer the questions on page 19.

Purpose is one of those words that is inspirational by nature. You know, the kind found on a motivational poster in your classroom with someone scaling the side of a mountain at sunset. It has a grand quality to it, a sense of pulling you into something bigger. But what is your purpose? What is your reason for being here?

As Christians, we might get caught up in trying to figure out our purpose in life as if it is some complicated trigonometry problem we have to solve. In reality, our purpose is pretty simple. Take a minute and read 1 John 4:7-8.

How did John sum up our purpose? Love. Really. That's his summary. It may seem a little vague to you, or a little broad. But, honestly, when we boil it all down, that's what the Christian life should be about: loving others because God has loved us.

John is saying in these verses that to know God means that we love others. Why? Because God Himself is love. It's the essence of His character. So, if God has redefined our lives—adopted us as His children—then love will naturally be our response and way of living.

What does the world tell you your purpose is? To get the right job? To make a certain amount of money? To find the perfect spouse and have the perfect family? In and of themselves, those things aren't bad. We can honor God in all of those. But those things aren't the goal. They aren't our purpose on this earth. To know God and make Him known—that is our deepest and truest purpose. When we know and love God, then we can't help but share His love with those around us. Paul tells the Corinthian church that it is the love of Christ which compels us in every way and makes us ambassadors for Christ (2 Cor 5:14; 20). When it is love that compels us, then we are freed up from spending our lives checking off a spiritual to-do list.

And get this: it all hinges on our identity. If our identity is misplaced, our purpose will be too. We will get distracted thinking our goal is to earn or carve out a place of significance in this world when in reality it is to give our lives away for the sake of Christ and His Kingdom.

Take a moment to think through the questions about what you just read. Use the space provided to write your answers.

1. What are ways in your daily life that you can better share the love of Christ? Perhaps even small acts of love that reflect Christ?

2. Who is someone that you feel God might be prompting you to share the Gospel with? How does that make you feel (you can be honest!)?

3. Are there other things that you see as your purpose that God might want to realign?

WEEK ONE DAY SIX

What do dirty clothes have to do with being redefined? Find out in today's short devotional, then work through the questions.

Think about a time you were really, really dirty then got to take a nice, warm shower. You step out clean and refreshed. The last thing you want to do is put on those dirty, sweaty clothes again. That would be gross. You need clean clothes because you are now clean. That's what Paul is talking about in Ephesians 4:22-24. Go ahead and read these verses.

This gets to the heart of what we have been talking about—what it means to be redefined. Paul has been reminding the Christians in Ephesus about what God has done, who they are in Christ, and now, how that radically changes the way they live. Their new life can't have all the trappings of their old one. They need to be defined by a renewed mind that makes their lives better reflect Christ.

It's essential that we think about the different ways that God redefines our lives. Why? Because a life lived in Christ should look different than one outside of Christ. And yet, we are inclined to do things our way instead of God's way. So, we all should, in Paul's words, be actively putting off our "old self," renewing our mind, and putting on our "new self." Spend some time in prayer, asking God to speak to you as you answer the following questions:

What do you need to put off? Things from your old self? Maybe things you haven't quite been able to shake?

What are ways that you can renew your mind? What can you set your mind on daily — things of God instead of only worldly things?

What do you need to put on? Maybe a spiritual discipline you would like to incorporate (like prayer or Christian meditation)? What fruit of the Spirit do you most need to be clothed in?

Finally, who will you share this with to help hold you accountable? How can they help walk with you to redefine these areas of your life?

WEEK ONE DAY SEVEN

Take today off..you've earned it!

If you want, look back and reflect on what you have learned this past week. Did something in particular stand out to you? Have you been coming back to a particular thought or question?

What was it that made that one thing so meaningful?

Think about the ways that God has redefined your life in Him. Listen and look for the ways He wants to speak to you today.