

UN IDENTIFIED

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EZEKIEL 36:26-27. "And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will give you, and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh, and I will put My Spirit within you, and you shall live, and be careful

to obey

EPHES

UNIDENTIFIED

and I will preach peace to you who were formerly far off and peace to those who were near. 18 For through his blood we have access in the Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of his household.

2 CORINTH

*FOLLOW-UP
DEVOTIONAL JOURNAL*

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ, the world to

*UNCOVERING
THE TRUTH
OF WHO WE
REALLY ARE*

THIS BOOK BELONGS TO: _____

DATE STARTED: _____

PUBLISHED BY YM360

Unidentified: Uncovering the Truth Who We Really Are

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“AND I WILL GIVE YOU A
NEW HEART, AND A NEW
SPIRIT I WILL PUT WITHIN
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MY SPIRIT WITHIN YOU, AND
CAUSE YOU TO WALK IN MY
STATUTES AND BE CAREFUL TO
OBEY MY RULES.”

EZEKIEL 36:26-27

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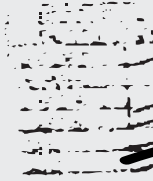
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GETTING STARTED

If you're holding this book right now, there's a good chance you have, at some time in the recent past, spent a fair amount of time studying what it means to go from unidentified to identified in Christ.*

Maybe you did this as part of a Disciple Now weekend or a weekend retreat. Maybe you did it in your small group or on Wednesday nights. Whatever the case, there was a moment when you reached the last session and you "finished" your look at the "why's" and "how's" of finding your identity in Jesus alone. Or so you thought...

This book you're holding represents the next phase of your journey.

In this book, you are going to take a much deeper look at God's design for your identity, how you can get it, and what it means for the rest of your life. For most of you, this means no small group and no leader. Just you, this book, your Bible, and the Holy Spirit as your Guide.

The time you spent studying Unidentified with your church or youth group was really only the beginning. This next stage of the journey is where you'll have the chance to see an even bigger picture of God's desire for you to find your identity in Him and how it can radically change not only your life but the lives of the people around you. And that's pretty exciting stuff...

Let's get started!

**Technically, you don't HAVE to have gone through Unidentified with your group. But you'll probably get a lot more out of this book if you have.*

HOW THIS BOOK WORKS

Here are a few things you need to know to put this book to good use.

START WITH THIS ADVICE

Whether you read your Bible each day or struggle to read a few verses a couple of times a week, commitment is the key to sticking with this through four weeks. Your routine may change, but your commitment to spending time with God each day has to be there. Tell yourself that whether you read this journal at the same time each day or just whenever you get a few extra minutes, you'll make it a priority in your daily life.

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 what you will discover in the Bible. 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 DIFFERENT

Each week's content works in similar ways, 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 the book and help you learn in ways that are suited to you.

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

Don't give up! Take this at your own pace! The goal is for you to grow closer to God. Don't throw in the towel if you miss a day or two (or four). 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!

THAT'S WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW TO GET STARTED! TURN THE PAGE TO READ THE INTRODUCTION TO WEEK 1.



WEEK ONE WEEK ONE

BEFORE STARTING WEEK 1, READ THIS SHORT INTRODUCTION.

Review days are the best, right? Especially when you have a big test coming up, there's nothing better than taking a full day to go over everything you've learned.

Even if you think you remember all there is to know, there might be something invaluable that you missed or didn't fully understand the first time around. Or maybe you just completely forgot about something that's really important. Review days are great for setting a solid foundation so that you can keep building on what you've learned.

That's kind of what this first week will be like. You probably went through the Unidentified study with your church not too long ago, and maybe you remember pretty much everything you heard. And while that may be true, by reviewing what you learned, you're setting a foundation to keep building what you know about God and your relationship with Him.

Over the next four weeks, you'll dig deep into God's Word and read more about what you've learned already – what it means to be unidentified, how we got there, how Jesus gives us a new identity, and what it means to live in that new identity. But for these next few weeks to be as fruitful as they can potentially be, we need to make sure we cover all our bases.

So, with that in mind, let's get started with Week 1!



WEEK ONE WEEK ON

WEEK 1

DAY 1

Read the devotional below and then fill out the chart on the next page.

Did you know that the heart is the hardest-working muscle in the human body? The average person's heart will beat over 3 billion times in their life! It's constantly pumping blood day and night, supplying nutrients, giving oxygen to your cells, carrying away waste, helping fight off any sicknesses, and even keeping your temperature stable. Didn't think you'd be getting a science lesson from this book, did you?

Needless to say, your heart is EXTREMELY important to your health and well-being. If something goes wrong with your heart, your whole life feels the effects. So, imagine if your heart was made of stone...not great.

READ EZEKIEL 36:26-27

“And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes and be careful to obey My rules.”

In this passage, God is telling Israel, through the prophet Ezekiel, that even though they have broken His rules and profaned (extreme disrespect) His Name, He will give them new hearts. Israel's hearts had become hardened to God, and their sinful behavior had caused a separation between He and them.

Sound familiar? Before you're identified in Christ, you have a stone heart that separates you from God, too. But one of the amazing things about God is that He still pursues you across that separation. To be sure, He's not okay with your sinful heart of stone, but He has the power to replace it with a heart of flesh. He's willing and able to spiritually revive you and make you brand new by giving you a heart that's joined to Him and attuned to His Spirit.

LET'S FLESH THIS OUT.

In the chart below, write some examples of what it looks like to have a heart of stone. Then, in the middle column, write down which one of God's rules speaks to that stone heart quality. Finally, in the right column, write down what having a changed heart of flesh would look like. There's an example for you already listed.

Heart of Stone	God's Rules	Heart of Flesh
Do what's best for you	<i>"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves."</i> - Philippians 2:3	Serve others instead

How can you live with a changed heart today?

DAY 2

Read the following devotional and answer the questions on the next page.

There's nothing brighter than the light in your room 5 seconds after you've just woken up. After being in the dark for so long, even a normal amount of light can be blinding.

When you think about it, it's quite the opposite of when you turn the lights out. When it's dark, your eyes have to get accustomed to the darkness before you can see, but as soon as the light turns on, everything's clear. The light immediately gets rid of any darkness.

Read John 1:1-5

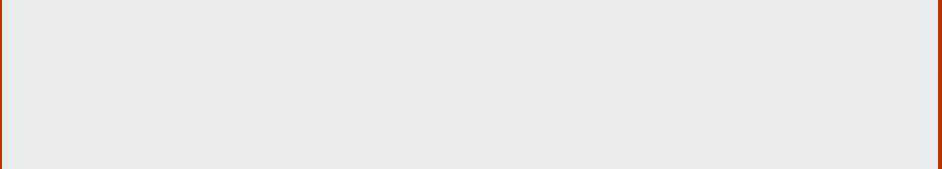
You might recognize these verses from when you went through this study with your church. If you do, you'll remember that you talked about how since everything was made through Jesus (including you), your original, God-given identity is in Him.

We're going to continue learning all that this means, but let's talk about what verses 4-5 say. In Jesus is life, and that life is the light of all humankind. When your identity is in Jesus, you not only have true life. You have His light within you. The light that shines in the darkness. The light that the darkness has not and cannot overcome.

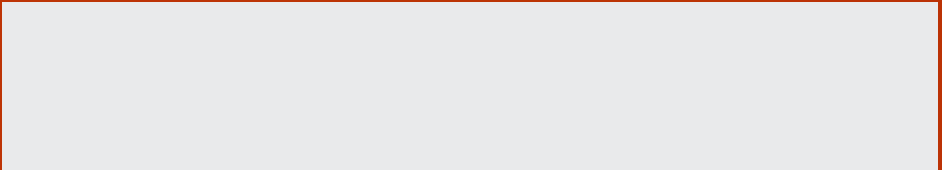
We all know that the world can be a really dark place, but it'll never be so dark that Jesus' light can't be seen. And if that light is in you, your life is like a beacon. Shining His light so that the darkness in other people's hearts can be replaced with true and eternal light and life. Today, ask God to show you where you can shine the light within you.

Reflect on what you just read and answer these questions.

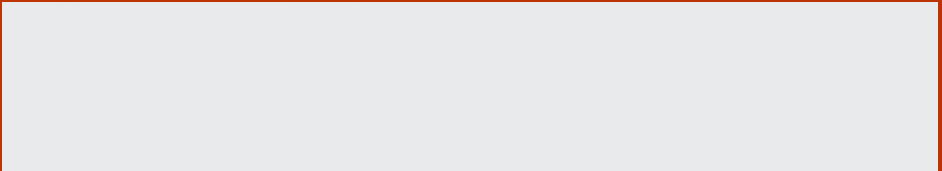
Why do you think it's important that Jesus was in the beginning at creation? Is this hard to believe? Why or why not?



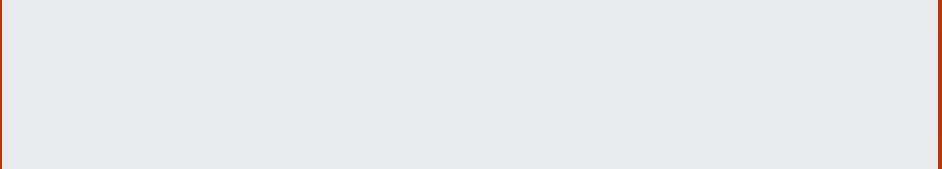
What do you think it means that in Jesus is life? What do you think it means that the life in Him is the light?



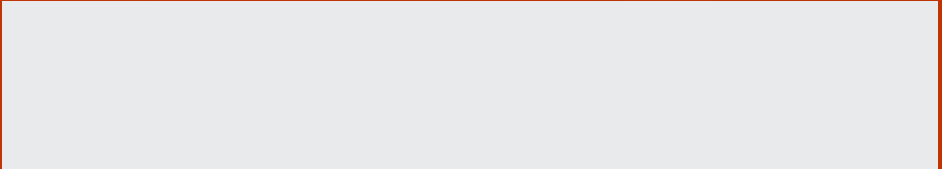
Are there any areas of your life that you might describe as "dark?" Why would you describe it that way?



How can Jesus' light shine in that area of your life?



How can you let Jesus' light shine through you in your world today?





WEEK 1

DAY 3

Read the following devotional and follow the instructions on the next page.

How great does it feel when you put in the hard work to earn something and you get your just reward? Think about that test you studied really hard for, so you got an A. Or the team you practiced for all week, so you won the game. Or that solo you worked countless hours to perfect, so you nailed it on the day of the performance. There's something so satisfying about focusing all your effort on one thing, being successful, and reaping the benefits.

But how would you feel if you failed and still got the prize? The large majority of us would say that being given something we don't deserve is pretty uncomfortable. That it goes against how we know the world to work. We earn what we get – that's just how it is.

But is it?

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

Paul is writing to Christ-followers in the city of Ephesus here, explaining some of the critical parts of our faith. He opens up this chapter with a striking statement...we were dead. Pretty devastating, right? But with just two little words, there's a dramatic change.

“But God.” Even when we were dead in sin, God made us alive in Christ because He is so gracious, merciful, and loving. We are unable to save ourselves, no matter how hard we work or how focused we are. When it comes to living up to God's standard of holiness, we fail. But because God is who He is, we can still receive the prize of eternal life through faith and by grace. Through Jesus, we can go from death to life, unidentified to identified in Him. What a gift!

YOUR TASK FOR TODAY IS A SIMPLE ONE.

As you go through your day, think about how wonderful that phrase “But God” really is. Try to remember that you were once dead in your sins and separated from God, but because He is so loving and merciful, He made you alive in Him! Have moments of gratefulness throughout your day, and let your new life encourage you to do good works.



DAY 4

Read the devotional below and answer the questions on the next page.

If you could have all the money, power, and fame in the world, what would you do to get it? Seriously, there would be no limits to what you would have. All your wildest dreams could come true in an instant. You could have the whole world if you wanted it.

But you'd have to pay a price. Because everything has a price, right? Think about it. What would you give? What would you do? Is everything you ever wanted worth your life?

Read Luke 9:23-25

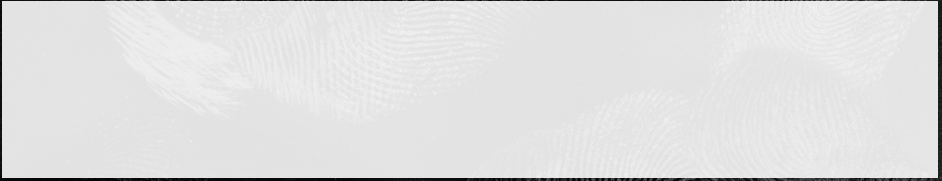
If you lost yourself along the way, no amount of money, power, or fame would ever be worthwhile. Everything in this world will one day pass away. It will all cease to exist. The only thing that will exist forever is our spiritual selves. Your earthly self may be driven by money, power, and fame, but those things are not eternal.

This is why Jesus tells us that in order to really save our lives, we have to lay them down. He died a gruesome, humiliating death on the cross in order to make a way for us to be saved. Now, Jesus isn't saying that we literally have to die on a cross to be saved, but He is saying that we have to put our personal preferences on the cross because the only way to true life is through His death.

We have to lay down self-promotion and self-affirmation. We have to lay down relying on ourselves. Instead, we have to live with our lives centered on Jesus and others. Because that's what Jesus did.

Reflect on what you just read and answer these questions.

What do you think it looks like to lay down your preferences?



Why do you think Jesus commands His followers to deny themselves and take up their cross?



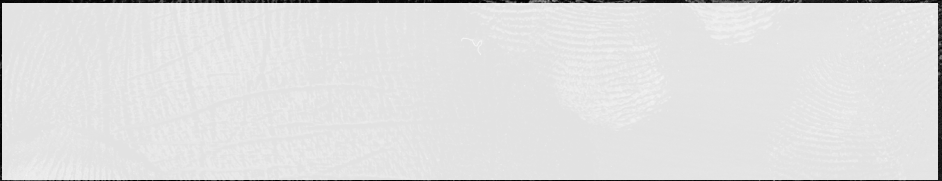
What makes it so hard to deny yourself in your daily life?



How can you practice being a person who's centered on others?



In your own words, explain what it means that the only way to true life is through Jesus' death.





WEEK 1

DAY 5

Read the following devotional and follow the instructions on the next page.

If you've ever been to a really good restaurant, bought a super comfortable piece of clothing, or had a really great experience somewhere, chances are you told someone about it. You probably recommended that they go and experience it for themselves because it was so great. Most of us want the people we care about to share in our awesome experiences.

Our identity in Christ is no different.

Read Matthew 28:16-20

The best thing any of us will ever experience is having our lives changed by the love of Jesus. His love, grace, and mercy outdo anything else we could ever have. Because of what He's done, we have hope, joy, and eternal life. We're new creations. We're not bound by our old selves or chained to our pasts or sins.

So, don't you think we should be sharing this news with anyone and everyone in our lives? If you truly believe that a relationship with Jesus is life-changing and the only way to heaven, we should be telling everyone about it!

Jesus commanded His disciples to go and make disciples of all nations, and if your identity is in Him, that command extends to you, too. That may sound like a daunting task, but don't worry, He's also with you to the end of the age.

In the box below, write out what you would say to someone if you wanted to tell them the good news of Jesus and what He's done in your life. Then, write down a few names of people you can share this with. Try to make it a point to have this conversation with them this week.



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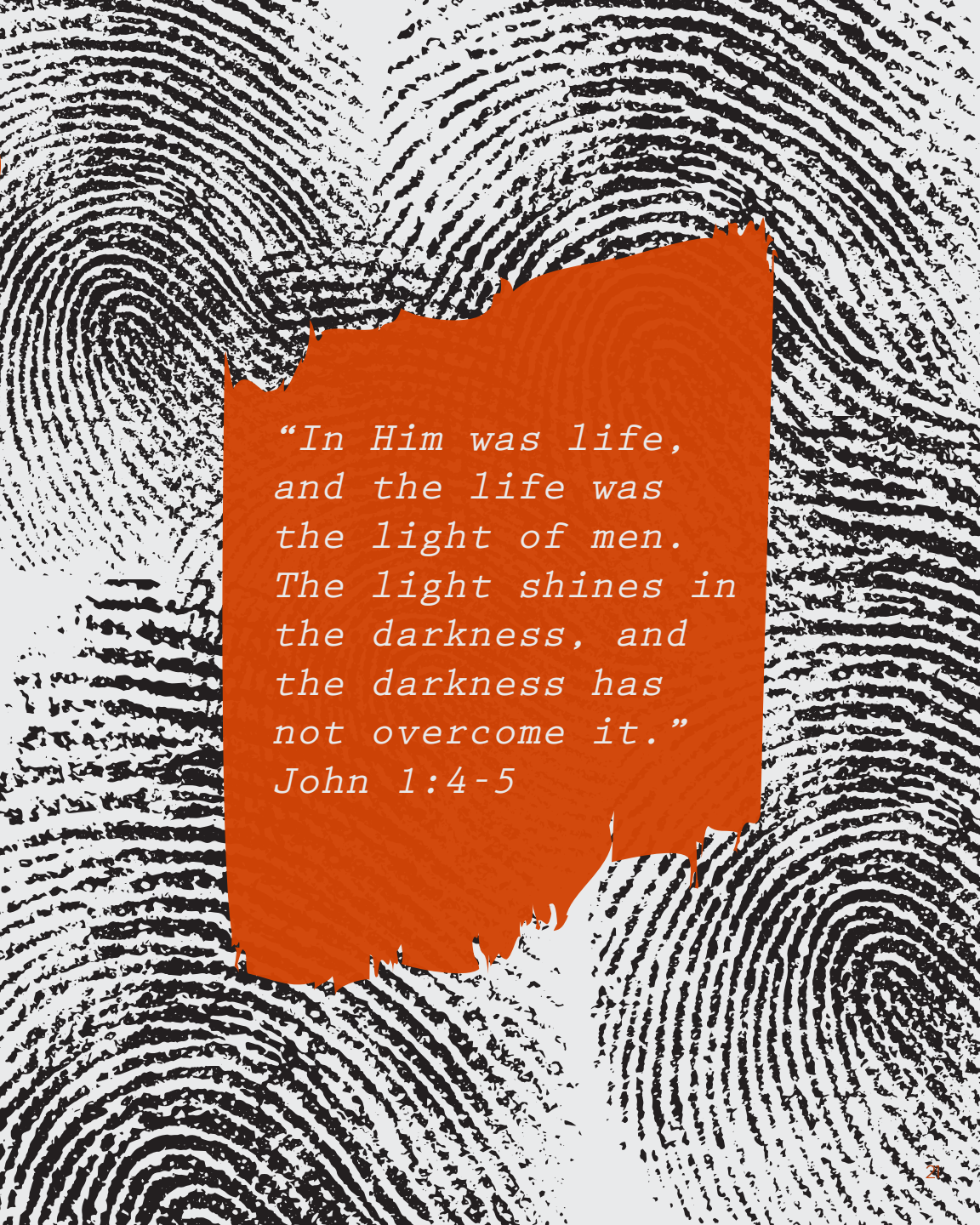
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RECAP

WEEK ONE WEEK ONE WEEK ONE

You're done with Week 1! Review time is over! Hopefully, you either remembered something super important, learned something new, or really had something click this week. Going forward, try to take something you've learned and put it into action in the real world. Going through this book can be a great thing, but if you never put it into action out there, it doesn't really mean too much.

The rest of this journal will spend some time diving deep into each of the things we reviewed this week. We're going to talk a lot more about the "what," "how," and "why" of going from unidentified to identified in Christ. So, get ready...these next few weeks could be life-changing!



*“In Him was life,
and the life was
the light of men.
The light shines in
the darkness, and
the darkness has
not overcome it.”
John 1:4-5*