

# VINE

**V**

VERSE

**I**

IMMERSE

**N**

NOW

**E**

ENGAGE

## WHAT IS A VINE JOURNAL?

The inspiration for Vine Journaling comes from an ancient practice called “Lectio Divina”. This Latin term simply means, *divine reading*, or in other words, a way of becoming immersed in the Scriptures very personally. With the vision of Life Church in mind, which is to help people know and follow Jesus step by step, the leadership of LCB believes this established and ancient practice will be of deep value in helping our Church family to know Jesus intimately and have found great benefit and enjoyment from this tool in approaching God’s word.

This Vine Journal is a tool for deepening your relationship with God. It is made up of four movements that aim to assist and facilitate your time spent with God. Throughout this time of reflection and communion with God, remember that we are loved by a God who longs to meet with us. His character is one of grace and truth as He desires for us to be formed in the image of His son Jesus, who willingly gave of Himself fully so that we could commune with Him eternally. In this regard we truly do “love Him because He first loved us.” (1 John 4:19 NIV)

# THE FOUR MOVEMENTS

## Verse

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“Man, does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matt 4:4 NIV) How do we as Jesus followers, made in the image of God, who is both body and Spirit, live healthy integrated lives? After all, Jesus did promise us that He came to give us life to the full! In the same way that it is important to nourish our physical bodies it is also important to nourish our spirits. We do this by consuming the word of God.

In this first movement of VINE journaling, we ask that you focus on the chosen passage, sit with God’s word - not moving quickly past it, contemplate it, and enjoy the sweetness of His words like honey on your lips (Psalm 119:103). We believe that our hearts are formed by what we give our attention to. So give your attention to the scripture! You can do this by reading the passage slowly, reading it again, pausing often to linger on meaningful words and phrases. Allow God’s word to sink into your heart and take root into the soil of your soul.

## Immerse

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Focus on depth over breadth. In this second movement of VINE journaling we want to immerse ourselves into the scripture. This might involve closing our eyes and using your imagination in a holy way to picture what it would be like to be present at the time when the scriptural account took place. Awaken your senses...what must it have smelled like to be in the room with Mary breaks her perfume at Jesus’ feet, how tired must the disciples have felt after walking all day, try to picture yourself in the story. During this imaginative prayer exploration we’d like to also encourage you to read the passage in varying translations, reference a commentary, or participate in a word study (meaning, look up the Greek and or Hebrew words and meanings of the word or phrase that stands out to you). It is in this pursuit of God that we deepen our relationship with Him. It is also in this practice where we experience the work of the Holy Spirit to renew our minds by “the washing of the word” (Ephesians 5:26).

## Now

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In the third movement we experience the beauty of a relational God. He wants us to not just know about Him, He desires us to truly know Him. During the “Now” movement, we ask the Holy Spirit, “Now what?” Is there application of the passage you have read for your own life? What is the Lord teaching you directly through His word and the insights you have received about Him, the Kingdom, and how to live? How is it moving from perception to practice, by calling you to love God, yourself, others, and the world more holistically? Listen with open ears and an open heart to what the Lord has to say. Write down what you hear and sense. Oftentimes writing thoughts down helps them to take shape and helps us to connect with them.

## Engage

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In this final movement, focus on Him and thank Him for His living word that you have received in this time of prayer and reflection. Perhaps you feel like putting on worship music or continue to process through journaling. Allow yourself the freedom to engage with the Lord in the way He wants you to engage with Him! Finally, archive this time with the Lord in a place where you can easily and frequently reflect on it during the day and in the future. Summarize what you feel the Lord has revealed to you and taught you. This will help cement this encounter into your heart and memory to build your faith in every season!



**WEEK 09**

# Trusting in the Silence

## **Psalm 13**

*How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever?  
How long will you hide your face from me?*

**2**

*How long must I wrestle with my thoughts  
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?  
How long will my enemy triumph over me?*

**3**

*Look on me and answer, Lord my God.  
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,*

**4**

*and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"  
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.*

**5**

*But I trust in your unfailing love;  
my heart rejoices in your salvation.*

**6**

*I will sing the Lord's praise,  
for He has been good to me.*

## CONTEXT

It is easy to see ourselves in the 13th Psalm of David as he asks God, *“How long, Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?”*

It seems that at some time or another in every believer’s life there comes a moment when it seems God is silent. And whether He is indeed silent or not is beside the point when it comes to the frustration, and maybe even pain, that we feel in those moments, weeks, seasons, or even years. Though what we feel doesn’t determine reality, our felt reality of His silence – or our perception of waiting a long time for Him can be difficult to process.

Examining this Psalm allows us to gain insight not only into the validation of our experience of longing for the Lord to move or answer us on our own timeframes, but also gives us a way forward in transitioning from discouragement and despair to a place of trust, joy, and peace.

The Psalmist’s frustration starts with looking upward, then moves inward to his own inner life, then outward; however underneath it all is his deep disappointment of feeling distant from God. Have you ever felt distant from God?

It’s possible to feel distant from God even when His Holy Spirit lives within you. David teaches us that it’s ok to voice this frustration. However, we also see that he doesn’t camp in that place. He chooses to transition his thoughts to remember the truth of God and focus on His character. In verse 5 we read, *“But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation.”*

In light of the whole gospel narrative, the truth of God’s character is unmistakable. He will never forget us. Through the prophet Isaiah God reveals his heart:

*But Zion said, “The LORD has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me.” Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands. (Isaiah 49: 14-16)*

This is reaffirmed in the New Testament when Jesus says:

*“...And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” (Matt. 28:20b)*

David’s honesty before the Lord gives us permission to also be fully honest to God in every season of our lives. Not being able to perceive what God is saying is normal, and we think even needed, as part of our walk with God. It is during these times of silence that we gain insight into His character and learn to trust in Him simply for who He is, and rejoice in His salvation all over again.

However, let us also not camp out in our feelings forever, but rather make the powerful choice to trust in God’s unfailing love. If He loves us with an unfailing love, then He surely will never fail us. Our prayer for you this week is to find comfort in David’s experience. We pray that as you place your trust in God, in the words of Charles Spurgeon, that your faith would “break out as the sun in its strength.”



# Day 01

*How long, Lord? Will you forget me  
forever?*

*How long will you hide your face from me?*

*How long must I wrestle with my thoughts  
and day after day have sorrow in my heart?*

*How long will my enemy triumph over me?*

*Psalm 13:1-2*

**VERSE** (Write out the passage.)

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**IMMERSE** (Reflect on the passage.)

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**NOW** (What is the application from the passage?)

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**ENGAGE** (Pray, ponder and become a practitioner of God's word.)

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# Day 02

***Look on me and answer, Lord my God.  
Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep in death,  
and my enemy will say, "I have overcome him,"  
and my foes will rejoice when I fall.***

## ***Psalm 13:3-4***

### **FURTHER CONTEXT**

In verse 3, David says, *"give light to my eyes..."* David was humble enough to know that although his feelings of discouragement were powerful, he wasn't seeing reality. He was willing to admit that the way he was seeing things was incorrect. His vision was blurry and dark, so he cried out to God, *"give light to my eyes."*

**VERSE** (Write out the passage.)

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**IMMERSE** (Reflect on the passage.)

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**NOW** (What is the application from the passage?)

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**ENGAGE** (Pray, ponder and become a practitioner of God's word.)

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# Day 03

*But I trust in your unfailing love;*

*Psalm 13:5a*

**VERSE** (Write out the passage.)

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**IMMERSE** (Reflect on the passage.)

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**NOW** (What is the application from the passage?)

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**ENGAGE** (Pray, ponder and become a practitioner of God's word.)

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# Day 04

*my heart rejoices in your salvation.*

*Psalm 13:5b*

**VERSE** (Write out the passage.)

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**IMMERSE** (Reflect on the passage.)

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**NOW** (What is the application from the passage?)

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**ENGAGE** (Pray, ponder and become a practitioner of God's word.)

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# Day 05

*I will sing the Lord's praise,  
for He has been good to me.*

*Psalm 13:6*

**VERSE** (Write out the passage.)

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**IMMERSE** (Reflect on the passage.)

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**NOW** (What is the application from the passage?)

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**ENGAGE** (Pray, ponder and become a practitioner of God's word.)

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