

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

“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

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

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

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 11

Rooted in Love

When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth.

I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. 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.

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:14-21

CONTEXT

When was the last time you fell to your knees when considering God's great eternal plan of grace and how your life fits into place in that plan? When's the last time you marveled at the fact that God's work is unstoppable?

Paul had this experience when he was imprisoned. In Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus he emphasizes God's plan of grace to save not only some people, but all people. His goodness was extending to all humanity! In this letter we see both a theological articulation of this mysterious salvation plan AND the practical explanation of how to live in light of this glorious grace-filled plan.

And isn't this what we all must strive for: an integrated faith, one where our belief of who God is and what He desires plays out in our own actions? Here Paul shares a picture of what it looks like when we as believers fail to integrate our theology with our everyday lives. 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 teaches that it doesn't matter if we can speak eloquently or even speak to angels, it doesn't matter if we have faith to move mountains, possess all theological knowledge, or give all our money to the poor; if we don't have the love of Christ in our hearts for ourselves and others, we in fact have nothing at all.

So how do we bring together our beliefs and behaviors? In Paul's profound Ephesians 3 prayer, he prays that through God's gloriously generous heart towards us that we would be strengthened through the power of the Holy Spirit and comprehend the wild love of God... an extravagant love that surpasses all of our understanding and does more than we could hope, dream, or imagine.

It is only an encounter with this extravagant love that can make a man imprisoned fall to his knees in awe of the goodness of God. Maybe today, you find yourself in a prison of sorts. Would you accept this letter of encouragement from Paul, meant to remind believers of old and those today of their boundless blessings in Jesus Christ? Can you, through receiving such extravagant love not only express gratitude for those blessings but also to live in a way that reflects their worth?

This week we pray that you would truly come to know the immeasurable love of God. That as you meditate on His word, the Spirit would allow your roots to grow down deep into the bedrock of God's love for you. May you live from this organic place of belief which produces the behavior of Christ!

Day 01

***When I think of all this, I fall to my knees
and pray to the Father, the Creator of
everything in heaven and on earth.***

Ephesians 3:14-15

VERSE (Write out the passage.)

IMMERSE (Reflect on the passage.)

NOW (What is the application from the passage?)

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

Day 02

I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.

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.

Ephesians 3:16-17

VERSE (Write out the passage.)

IMMERSE (Reflect on the passage.)

NOW (What is the application from the passage?)

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

Day 03

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 3:18-19

VERSE (Write out the passage.)

IMMERSE (Reflect on the passage.)

NOW (What is the application from the passage?)

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

Day 04

Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.

Ephesians 3:20

VERSE (Write out the passage.)

IMMERSE (Reflect on the passage.)

NOW (What is the application from the passage?)

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

Day 05

***Glory to him in the church and in Christ
Jesus through all generations forever and
ever! Amen.***

Ephesians 3:21

VERSE (Write out the passage.)

IMMERSE (Reflect on the passage.)

NOW (What is the application from the passage?)

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