

# 31-Day Bible Reading Plan using the HEAR Journal Method

In the past years, post-camp devotions have been written for you. Last year, we introduced a new way to spend time with God that equips you to dive into the Word on your own without relying on a pre-written devotional that will end after a few weeks. It's called HEAR journaling. This may be a refresher or brand new to you. Learn more below and then give it a try!

It's amazing when God speaks to us through His Word. The goal is not to just check off the box of reading your Bible, but to be transformed as we spend intentional time with the Lord. Every time we open our Bibles, we should pray the simple prayer that David prayed: *"Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law (Word)"* (Psalm 119:18).

Pro tip: When you do use a written devotional, make sure that its focus is on God's Word and how knowing God is life-changing! This is your time to go deep with God.

## WHAT IS A HEAR JOURNAL?

The acronym H.E.A.R. stands for Highlight, Explain, Apply and Respond. Each of these four steps helps us lean into hearing God speak as we study His Word. This can be done with any passage of scripture from the Bible. Before you begin, designate a journal that you will use to write in for this specific purpose.

## HOW TO COMPLETE A HEAR JOURNAL

Below, you'll find instructions to guide your time working through a HEAR Journal, and an example will be provided for day one of the reading plan. We're going to get you started by providing a reading plan through the Gospel of Mark. From there, find a Bible reading plan that works for you. If you need help finding one, reach out to a youth leader or explore the Bible App.

### H - HIGHLIGHT

After reading the daily passage of Scripture, pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you toward one or two verses that stood out and spoke to you. Simply HIGHLIGHT those verses by writing them under the letter "H" in your journal.

### E - EXPLAIN

Then, you will EXPLAIN what the text means. By asking some simple questions, with the help of God's Spirit, you can begin to better understand the meaning of a passage or verse. Here are a few questions to get you started:

- Why was this written?
- To whom was it originally written?
- How does it fit with the verses before and after it?
- Why did the Holy Spirit include this passage in the book?
- What is He intending to communicate through this text?

At this point, you are beginning the process of discovering the specific and personal truth that God has for you from His Word. If you don't fully understand something, that's OK. What is important is that you are engaging the text and wrestling with its meaning. You can also seek after trusted sources (people or commentaries).

### A - APPLY

After writing a short summary of what you think the text means, take time to APPLY the text to your life. Application is at the heart of this process. As you've done before, answer a series

of questions to uncover the significance of these verses to you personally, such as:

- How can this help me?
- What does this mean today?
- What would the application of this verse look like in my life?
- What does this mean to me?
- What is God saying to me?

These questions will help you bridge the gap between the ancient world and your world today. They provide a way for God to speak directly to you. Challenge yourself to write between two and five sentences about how the text applies to your life.

## **R - RESPOND**

Finally, RESPOND. Your response to the passage may take on many forms. You may write a call to action. You may describe how you will be different because of what God has said to you through His Word. You may respond by writing out a prayer to God.

## **THE HEAR JOURNAL FORMULA WORKS**

Notice that all of the words in the HEAR Journal formula are action words: Highlight, Explain, Apply and Respond. God does not want us to sit back and wait for Him to drop some truth into our laps. Instead of waiting passively, God desires that we actively pursue Him. Jesus said, *“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you”* (Matthew 7:7).

## **SAMPLE HEAR JOURNAL**

Below is a sample HEAR Journal entry from the beginning of your 31-Day Reading Plan. Then pick your own verse to Highlight and complete your first HEAR journal. This reading plan will take you through the entire Book of Mark, one of the four Gospels. Don't stop when the month is over. Pick another chapter and keep going! We pray that this is the beginning of a lifelong pursuit of knowing God in His Word.

## **SAMPLE HEAR JOURNAL: Mark 1:1-20**

### **Highlight**

*Mark 1:14-15 - “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”*

### **Explain**

*As Jesus began His ministry on earth (and John the Baptist's neared its end), He didn't delay in letting people know why He had come and what they needed to do for salvation - repent and believe. They had waited long enough for a Savior. The time had come. His invitation to become part of God's Kingdom was now.*

### **Apply**

*I'm reminded that God's call is one of action. Repentance is something that is part of the life of a believer. Turning away from my sin and turning to God is necessary for me to be close to Him. This isn't just a one time thing. It's daily. And to believe in God is to believe that He is my Lord and Savior. I can trust Him with my life. I need to live like I believe that and tell others just as Jesus did.*

## Respond

*Lord, help me to be a true disciple, one who lives as a light shining in a dark world. Draw me to your Word daily so that I can be changed and have a deeper relationship with you. Thank you for inviting me into your Kingdom. And when I need to repent of my sins, lead me to the foot of the cross where your blood was shed for me. Amen.*

### 31-DAY READING PLAN

- |                                 |              |                                 |               |                                 |               |
|---------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 1  | Mark 1:1-20  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 12 | Mark 6:30-56  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 23 | Mark 12:1-27  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 2  | Mark 1:21-45 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 13 | Mark 7:1-23   | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 24 | Mark 12:28-44 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 3  | Mark 2:1-17  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 14 | Mark 7:24-37  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 25 | Mark 13:1-37  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 4  | Mark 2:18-28 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 15 | Mark 8:1-21   | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 26 | Mark 14:1-26  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 5  | Mark 3:1-19  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 16 | Mark 8:22-38  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 27 | Mark 14:27-52 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 6  | Mark 3:20-35 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 17 | Mark 9:1-29   | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 28 | Mark 14:53-72 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 7  | Mark 4:1-25  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 18 | Mark 9:30-50  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 29 | Mark 15:1-20  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 8  | Mark 4:26-41 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 19 | Mark 10:1-31  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 30 | Mark 15:21-47 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 9  | Mark 5:1-20  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 20 | Mark 10:32-52 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 31 | Mark 16:1-20  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 10 | Mark 5:21-43 | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 21 | Mark 11:1-14  |                                 |               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Day 11 | Mark 6:1-29  | <input type="checkbox"/> Day 22 | Mark 11:15-33 |                                 |               |