

MASTERPIECE

**DISCOVERING MY
UNIQUE DESIGN THROUGH
GOD'S WORD**

WEEKLY DEVOTIONALS

BY TONIA STACEY GÜTTING

**HERO
SQUAD**
VARSITY EDITION

Masterpiece, Guys Varsity Squad Edition, Summer Issue

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Requests for information should be addressed to:

American Bible Society

101 North Independence Mall East, Floor 8

Philadelphia, PA 19106-2155

www.americanbible.org

herosquad@americanbible.org

www.myherosquad.org

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WRITE THE NICKNAME YOUR FRIENDS & FAMILY CALL YOU:

WHAT IS ONE KIND THING SOMEONE DID FOR YOU LATELY?

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE OUTDOOR ACTIVITY?

Lost & Found

IF SOMEONE FINDS YOUR BOOK, DO YOU WANT THEM TO RETURN IT?

☐

**YES, CALL THE
NUMBER BELOW!**

☐

NO, JUST KEEP IT.

WRITE YOUR CELL PHONE OR EMAIL ADDRESS ON THIS LINE:



CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------------------|----|
| What is a Masterpiece? | 6 |
| How to Use this Book | 8 |
| Tips & Ideas | 9 |
| WEEK 14: Breaking Free from Fear | 10 |
| WEEK 15: The God Who Knows | 14 |
| WEEK 16: Finding Peace | 20 |
| WEEK 17: Before and After the Battle | 24 |
| WEEK 18: What's Your Job? | 30 |
| WEEK 19: Building Trust | 34 |
| WEEK 20: The Terrifying Beauty | 40 |
| WEEK 21: Living the Dream | 44 |
| WEEK 22: Hope for the Hopeless | 50 |
| WEEK 23: God of the Full Story | 54 |
| WEEK 24: Fight the Fear of Failing | 60 |
| WEEK 25: Right Where He Wants You | 64 |
| WEEK 26: Where is God? | 70 |

WHAT IS A MASTERPIECE?

Master
Piece

A masterpiece is a work of outstanding artistry, craftsmanship, or skill. Different types of things can be considered masterpieces, like a painting, a house, or even a car! God is the greatest masterpiece maker of all time, because he made you—his greatest creation of all.

WRITE FIVE THINGS ABOUT YOURSELF THAT YOU'RE GRATEFUL GOD DESIGNED:

A feature that sets apart a masterpiece is its intentional, unique, or intricate design. This devotional will help you discover, through God's Word, the purposeful and detailed ways God designed you to be his masterpiece.

WHAT ARE THREE THINGS YOU WANT TO LEARN FROM GOD THIS SUMMER?

EXAMPLE: To understand God's love for me

How to Use this Book

This book is created especially for Military children, like you, who face unique battles in life. Follow these simple guidelines to get the most out of this book.

1. READ

Read the devotional each week to learn more about loving God, yourself, and other people.

2. REFLECT

Think about how the devotional applies to your life and what you are feeling right now.

3. EXPLORE

Complete the weekly “Spiritual Fitness Training” to explore how you can live out God’s Word each week..

4. LEARN

Look up each Bible verse in the “Keep It Going” section to learn more about God.

5. EXPRESS

Use the notes and doodles sections to write down any thoughts or questions you have about God or any ideas you have to live out God’s Word each week. Use these pages to express yourself in your own unique way, like the unique masterpiece you are!

Tips & Ideas



Think about things you might want to change in your life.



Talk with your parents or siblings about what you learned and ask them to help you with live out God's Word each week.



If you don't understand something you read, don't be afraid to ask an adult to help you understand it.



Memorize the Scripture verse each week.



Have fun and mark up this book with your own thoughts and doodles!

Don't fear

WEEK FOURTEEN

Breaking Free from Fear



I am the Lord, the one who encourages you. Why are you afraid of mere humans? They dry up and die like grass.

Isaiah 51:12

Who are you afraid of? The kid on social media who purposely posts mean comments directed at you? The friend who threatens to reject you any time you disagree with them? The adult who cuts you down, making you feel like an idiot? The coach who is sometimes unfair to you?

We are made to need people in our lives but not be ruled by them. As we grow, we learn to balance people's opinions of us with what God thinks about us (which is the truth about us!). We settle into being comfortable with who we are and finding people who love us.

This week's Scripture verse shows us how we can begin to grow in that confidence—by getting closer to God. He is always standing with you and giving you courage and strength to face any situation or person in life.

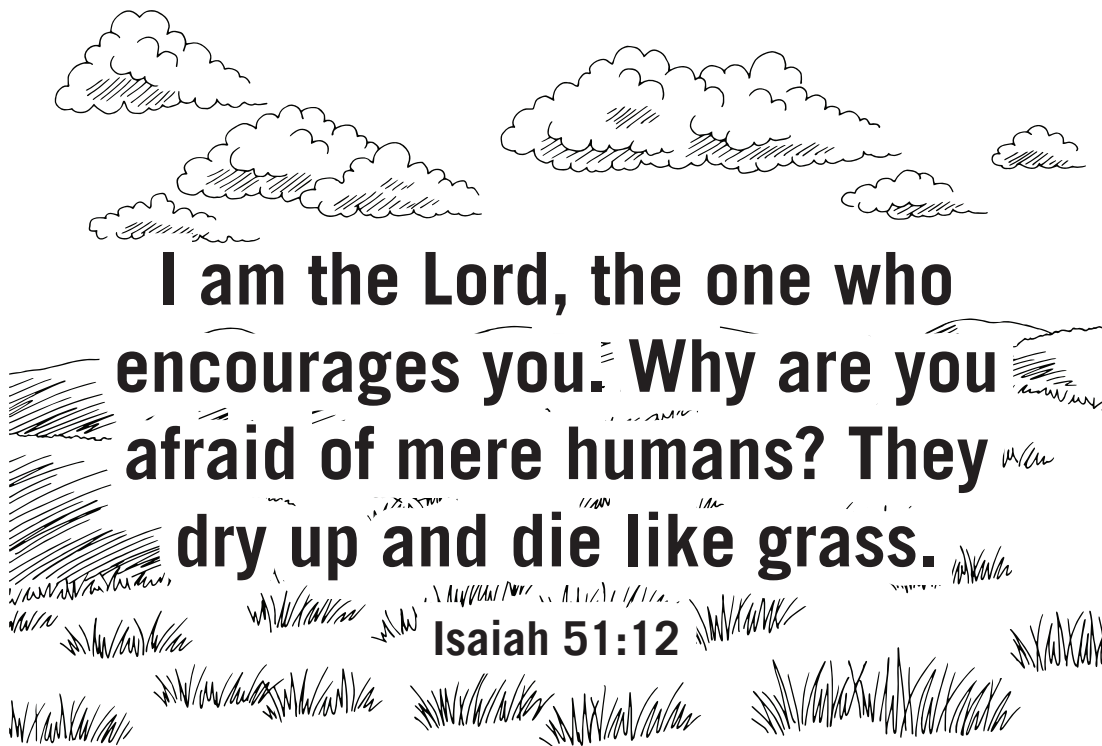
So do your best to focus on God. You can do this by spending special time with him every day in prayer and by reading your Bible. Or you can find quiet moments to think about who he is (like in this week's Spiritual Fitness Training). As you get closer to him, you will learn to filter every hurtful comment through his truth. Does he say you are worthless? Does he say you can't? Never! Drown out the fears of what others think with the truth of what God says. People's feelings and opinions change, like grass that dries up and dies, but God's love will never change or fail you. Don't fear man! God is with you.

***Drown out the fears of what others
think with the truth of what God says.***

Master
Piece

Spiritual Fitness Training

Spending time with Jesus doesn't always mean praying out loud or sitting in a church service. Jesus wants to be close to you throughout your day. You can get closer to Jesus by thinking about him more often. Spending time in nature is a great way to start, because you can think about God as you see all the amazing things he created! This week, spend time outside alone. Bring this book and a pen or pencil so you can write down your thoughts as you think about God and his goodness. Jesus is with you! Praise him for always being close to you.



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Joshua 1:9

☐ 2 Timothy 1:7

☐ Proverbs 29:25

☐ 1 Peter 1:24-25

**Week
Fourteen**

"Do not fear mistakes.
You will know failure.
Continue to reach out."

—Benjamin Franklin,
one of the Founding Fathers of
the United States of America

Write Your Thoughts Here



DID YOU KNOW?

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place using digital devices (like cell phones), mainly through interactive apps used for text messaging, social media, or gaming. Cyberbullying is a serious problem, and many states have laws against it. If you feel you or someone you know is being bullied online, talk to a trusted adult, and show them what is happening. You don't have to fight it alone.

Higher thoughts

WEEK FIFTEEN

The God Who Knows



*Who can measure the wealth and wisdom and knowledge of God?
Who can understand his decisions or explain what he does? Has anyone
known the thoughts of the Lord or given him advice?*

Romans 11:33–34

Science is amazing. It has brought us heart transplants, pictures from Mars, and a robot that vacuums. With so much knowledge at our fingertips, we often get the feeling we've got it all figured out.

In fact, there is a famous quote, "Everything that can be invented has been invented."

Guess when that quote was said? In 1899—before the invention of cars and televisions, telephones and computers, the internet and social media.

Sure, we've come so far. But there is still so much we don't know about the complicated world God created. Did you know that, according to NASA, we have only explored up to 15 percent of the ocean floor on this entire planet? It's a little scary to think what's lurking down there!

But God knows. He knows the big stuff, like every plant and creature on the ocean floor and the temperature at the core of the sun. And he knows the stuff that applies just to you—and that stuff is big to him, too, because of his deep care and love for you as his child.

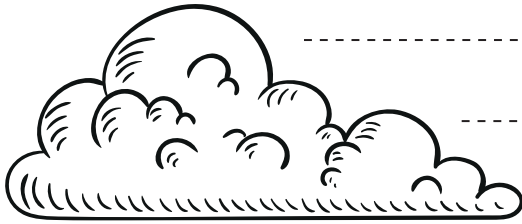
So when you feel it's hard to understand God's plan, or you don't agree with it, read this week's Scripture passage. Remind yourself of God's infinite wisdom. Ask him to help you trust that he knows what is best for you. Let that trust help you

Master
Piece

***Knowing who God is will help you trust
that he knows what is best for you.***

Spiritual Fitness Training

Understanding who God is will help you trust him more. When you begin to realize just how wise and powerful he is, it will bring you to a place of wonder and worship. Take some time to think about God, who he is, and what he has created. Make a list of the things that you are in awe of!



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Psalm 139:6

☐ 1 Corinthians 1:25

☐ Isaiah 40:13–14

☐ James 1:5

**Week
Fifteen**

"Happy the soul that
has been awed by a view
of God's majesty."

—Arthur Walkington Pink,
English Bible teacher who lived
in the early 1900s

Write Your Thoughts Here



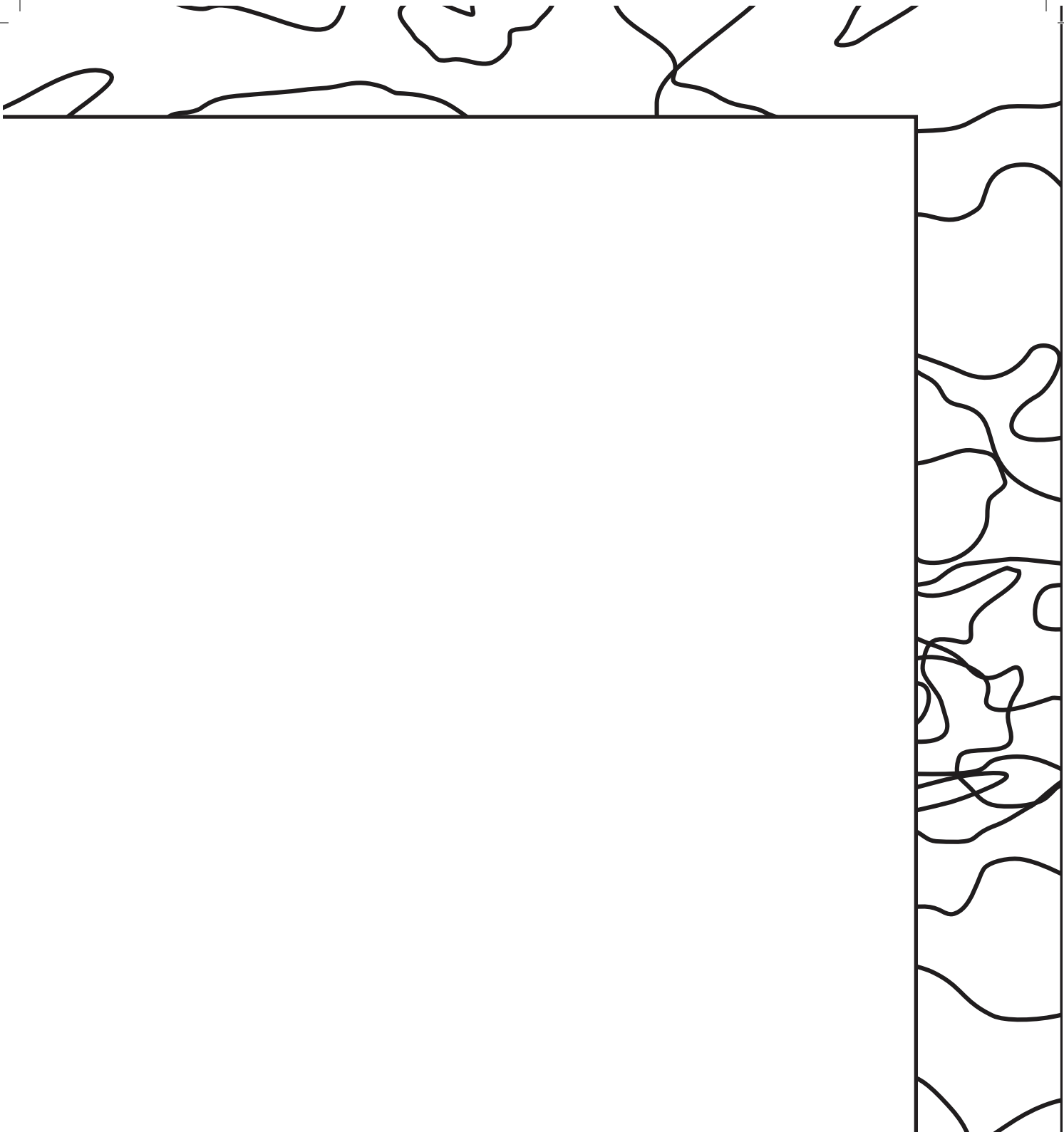
TALKING TO GOD

Lord, please forgive me
for thinking I know better than
you. You alone know everything,
and you are the source of all
wisdom. Amen.

Doodle Space



Master
Piece



Week
Fifteen

God forgives

WEEK SIXTEEN

Finding Peace



How far has the Lord taken our sins from us?

Farther than the distance from east to west!

Psalm 103:12

Yup. You did it. You screwed up. And since you did, it seems you are hopelessly tainted so, oh well, you might as well keep going.

Except that's not how Jesus works. Because of Jesus, you have hope! Because of him, you aren't forever in trouble. Because of him, you can quit doing the same sins. You can heal. You can move forward.

And then you can forgive others who hurt you: the friend who ghosted you when you really needed them, the sibling who treats you unfairly behind your parents' backs, the Military that took your parent away for too long . . .

Life is full of hurts, and the only hope for true healing is Jesus's forgiveness. Through his amazing love, he paid the terrible price of a painful death on the cross so he could offer us forgiveness for free.

Knowing Jesus forgives you, how could you not forgive others?

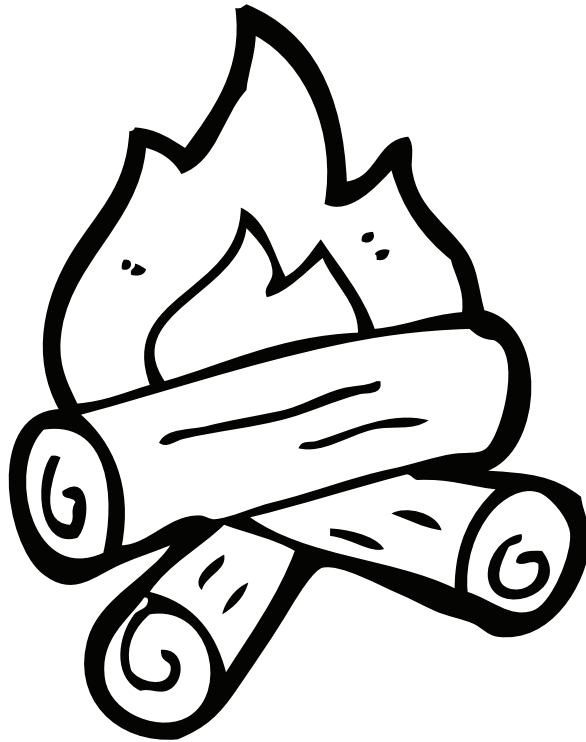
This week, get real with God about your sin and ask for his forgiveness. Ask him to help you stop making wrong choices. And then ask him to help you forgive others. Even when it's hard, he can help you let go of that hurt and resentment that you feel so you can experience true peace. And that is what forgiveness is all about.

Master
Piece

***Knowing Jesus forgives you, how
could you not forgive others?***

Spiritual Fitness Training

Build a fire in your fireplace or a campfire in your back yard (with your parent's permission, of course!). Cut out small squares of paper. On each one, write a sin that you have trouble avoiding, or write the name of someone whose wrong choices hurt you. Then read each paper, think about those feelings, and throw the paper into the fire. As you watch it burn, thank God that he takes your sin away and helps you to forgive others. Afterward, spend some quiet time in front of the fire and feel God's peace surround you. (If you don't have access to building a fire, take a trashcan somewhere quiet and private, and rip up each paper into pieces before throwing into the trashcan.)



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ 2 Chronicles 7:14

☐ Luke 11:4

☐ Psalm 130:3–4

☐ Colossians 3:13

**Week
Sixteen**

"To be a Christian
means to forgive the
inexcusable because
God has forgiven the
inexcusable in you."

—C.S. Lewis, professor, author,
and theologian in the 20th century

Write Your Thoughts Here



DID YOU KNOW?

According to *Psychology Today*, many studies have shown that people who forgive are happier and healthier than those who do not. Choosing to not forgive leads to stress, high blood pressure, and heart issues.

Before and After the Battle



*You are my strong fortress,
and you set me free.*
2 Samuel 22:33

Louis Zamperini survived being shot down over the Pacific Ocean, being lost at sea for 47 days, and being tortured for two years as a Japanese prisoner in World War II. How could anyone survive that?

He relied on the strength of his body and mind, and sheer willpower. “If you can take it, you can make it,” he told himself.

But when he got home and faced the nightmares and flashbacks of PTSD, it brought him to his knees. He found himself trapped in a prison of the mind and a cycle of alcoholic binges.

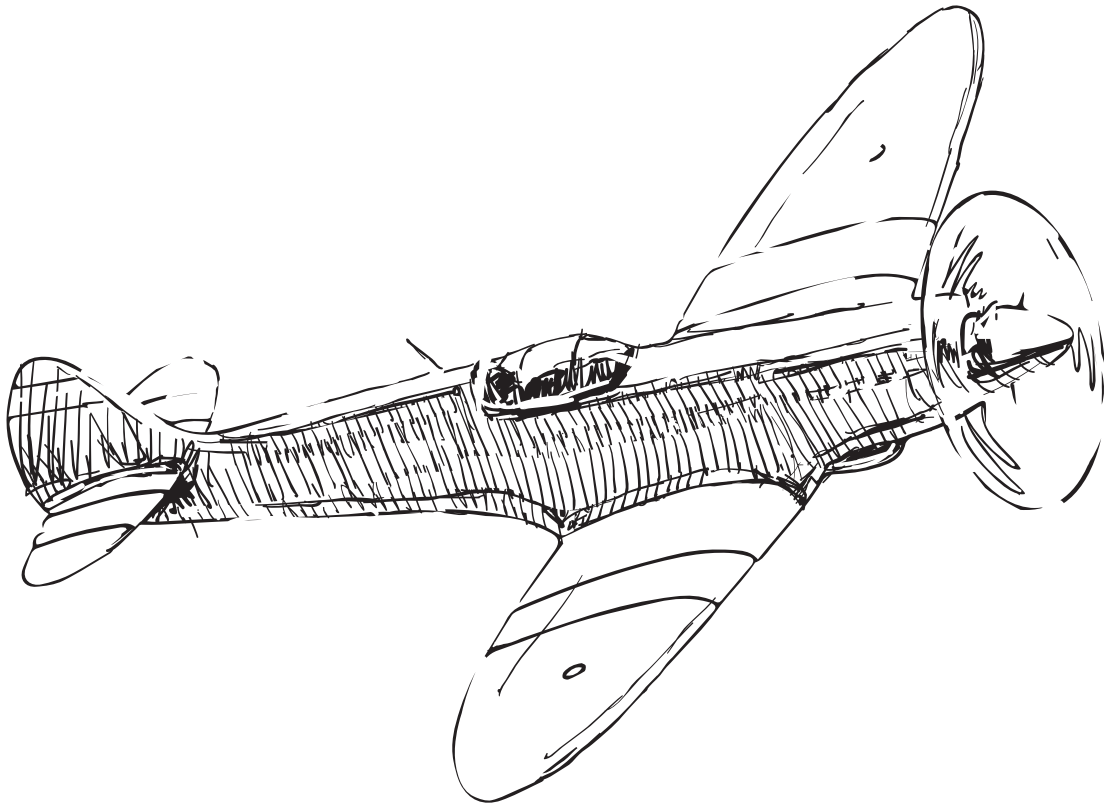
When his own strength failed him, an encounter with God saved him. After listening to American preacher Billy Graham speak from the Bible, Louis chose to follow Jesus Christ. God gave him the strength to forgive his former jailers. “God knew my needs and took care accordingly,” he said. His story is so remarkable, it’s retold in the book and movie called *Unbroken*.

This week’s verse was written by King David, a man God used mightily to protect the nation of Israel. David attributes all his abilities and success in battle to God. When a warrior puts their trust in God, they are never alone because God is always with them, helping them.

God is with you, too. Your battles may seem smaller than Louis Zamperini’s or King David’s, but in God’s eyes they are just as important. Whatever you are going through, put your trust in God. He will give you strength to get through.

Spiritual Fitness Training

Veterans have all kinds of amazing stories of how God helped them through difficult situations. Ask a Veteran you know to tell you about their story! Then thank God for the strength he gives you each day.



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ 2 Samuel 22:30–35

☐ 1 Corinthians 1:25

☐ Psalm 144:1

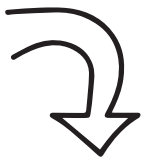
☐ 2 Thessalonians 2:16–17

**Week
Seventeen**

"True to his (God's) promise,
he came into my heart and my
life. The moment was more than
remarkable; it was the most
realistic experience I'd ever
had . . . I felt no tremendous
sensation, just a weightlessness
and an enveloping calm that let
me know that Christ had come
into my heart."

—Louis Zamperini in his book
Devil at My Heels

Write Your Thoughts Here

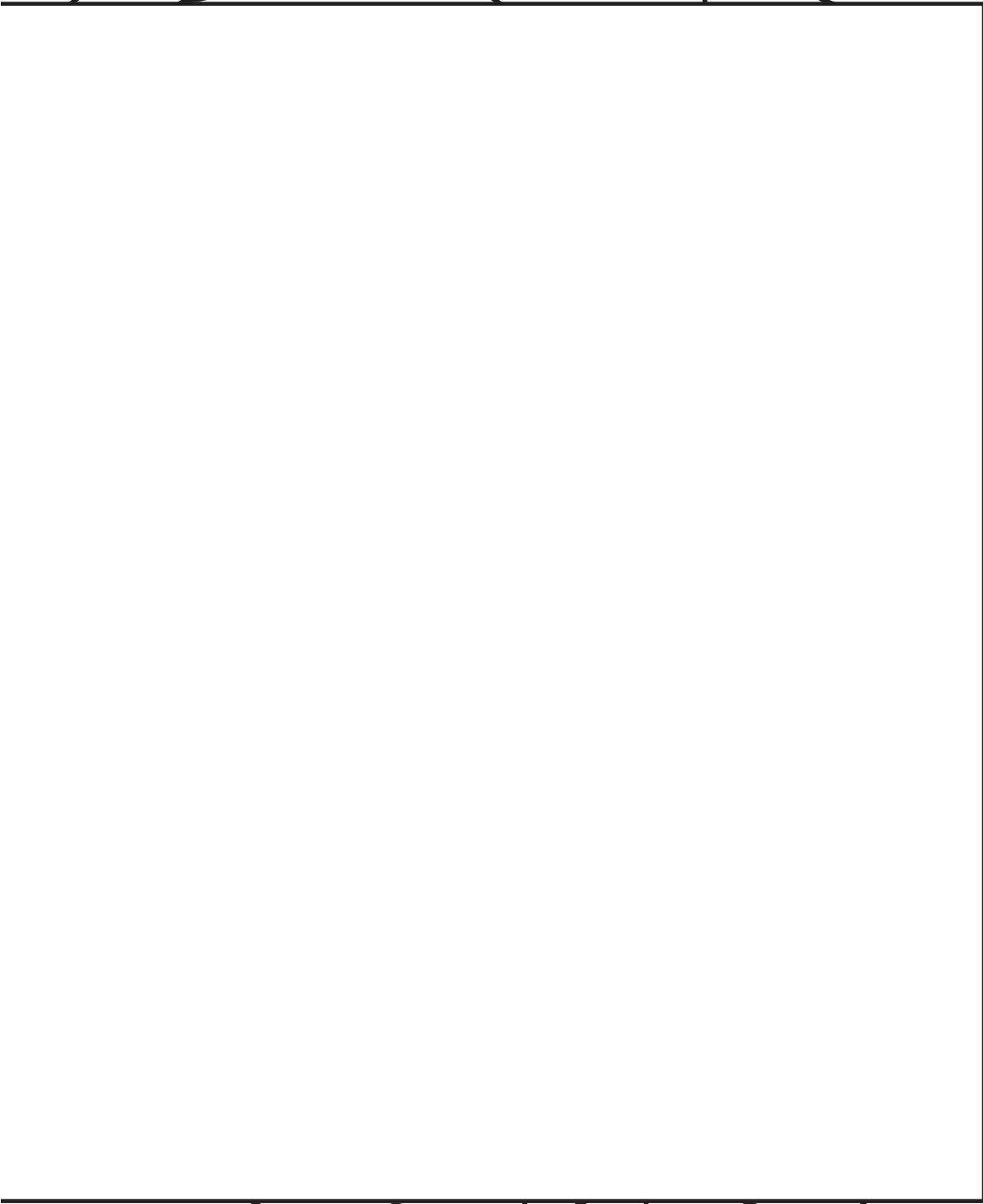


TALKING TO GOD

Lord, thank you for helping me
through all of the battles that I go
through in life. You are my strength.
Amen.

Doodle Space





Week
Seventeen

What's Your Job?



So God created humans to be like himself; he made men and women. God gave them his blessing and said: Have a lot of children! Fill the earth with people and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the ocean, the birds in the sky, and every animal on the earth.

Genesis 1:27–28

The older you get, the more people ask, “What are you going to do with your life?” Maybe you’ve known since you were a kid. Maybe your parents want you to do something they like. Maybe others have said you’d be good at something. Maybe you have no idea. (That’s okay, too!)

Make more money, be in charge of people, be super famous . . . none of these aspirations will ultimately satisfy. The thing that stirs the deepest passion is doing what the Lord created you to do.

When God gave you the breath of life, he designed you with ideas, desires, and abilities to take a specific, important part in caring for this world. That might mean several different jobs over your lifetime. It also means caring for your neighbor and neighborhood now.

Instead of getting too caught up in the pressure of figuring out the rest of your life or your future career, take a moment to think about your life right now. Read this week’s Scripture passage again and brainstorm ideas of how you can do God’s work.

Throughout the Bible, God used young people (yes, even teenagers!) to make big changes in the world. He can use you, too!

Spiritual Fitness Training

Work through the training below to discover ways God can use you to make the world a better place. Review the left column and check off the things that interest you. Then consider trying the corresponding activity in the right column or think of your own creative way to help. **Bonus:** Ask your school counselor how you can track your volunteer hours. Doing so will help you as you plan your future, like when applying to college or for a new job.

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DOG, CATS, AND OTHER ANIMALS | Call your local animal shelter and ask if you can volunteer at a pet adoption event. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FLOWERS AND GARDENS | Find out if your town or a neighboring town has a community garden. Volunteer for one Saturday to pull up weeds and water dry plants. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OCEANS, LAKES, AND RIVERS | Grab a big garbage bag and a pair of gloves. Go to a local body of water and pick up any litter scattered around the edge of the water. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CHILDREN | Find out if any elementary age kids in your neighborhood could use special help in a subject you are good at. Offer to tutor them for one hour a week (which can be as simple as helping them with their homework). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OLDER PEOPLE | Call a local nursing home and ask if they have volunteer opportunities for teenagers. Elderly people can get lonely, so it means a lot when someone spends time with them doing things like playing checkers or reading a book to them. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> _____ | |

Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Psalm 8:3–5

☐ Micah 6:8

☐ Psalm 8:6–9

☐ Matthew 28:19–20

**Week
Eighteen**

“ . . . Our work can be
a calling only if it is
reimagined as a mission of
service to something beyond
merely our own interests.
Thinking of work mainly as
a means of self-fulfillment
and self-realization slowly
crushes a person.”

—Timothy Keller, American author
and pastor in New York City

Write Your Thoughts Here



DID YOU KNOW?

An apple tree in Ohio is the last known one that was planted by Johnny Appleseed 150 years ago.

Johnny planted apple trees in several states for the good of the local people in the early 1800s.

Unchanging God

WEEK NINETEEN

Building Trust



Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father who created all the lights in the heavens. He is always the same and never makes dark shadows by changing.

James 1:17

What are you afraid to lose?

A scientist named Maslow came up with a “hierarchy of needs”—a list of needs that must be met for people to feel fulfilled. It includes, in this order: shelter and food, safety and health, love, respect and esteem, and self-actualization (which means becoming your best).

We are worried, then, when we are afraid these needs won’t be met. And this changing world—with viruses, wars, storms, bullying, social pressure, etc.—threatens to leave those needs unfulfilled.

All the changes around us can make it hard to feel secure, to feel safe and at peace.

But there is one thing that never changes—God. He is the provider of all our needs, and since he never changes, we don’t have to worry that our needs will not be met. No matter what happens, God remains the same, and he promises to take care of us.

Trusting God is the key to getting over the worries that the changing world brings. You can build your trust in God through praying to him, reading and thinking about the words in the Bible, and spending more time with other people who know and love him.

When you feel nervous about all the changes happening around you, read this week’s Scripture verse and remind yourself that true peace comes from trusting the unchanging God.

Trusting God is the key to getting over the worries that the changing world brings.

Master
Piece

Spiritual Fitness Training

The word meditation means “deeply thinking about something.” To meditate on God’s Word, you can pause for a moment, take a deep breath, put away other distractions like phones or TV, and think about what those specific words mean. Set a timer for five minutes and try to meditate on this week’s Scripture verse, written below. Listen to what God might be trying to teach you through his Word.

EVERY GOOD AND
perfect gift
COMES DOWN FROM
the Father
WHO CREATED
all the lights
IN THE HEAVENS.

JAMES 1:17a

Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

- | | |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Numbers 23:19 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 Thessalonians 5:23–24 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Malachi 3:6a | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Timothy 2:11–13 |

**Week
Nineteen**

*"Nothing is a surprise to God.
Nothing is a problem for God.
Nothing is a mistake by God.
Anything is possible with God."*

*—Anne Voskamp, from her book
One Thousand Gifts*

Write Your Thoughts Here



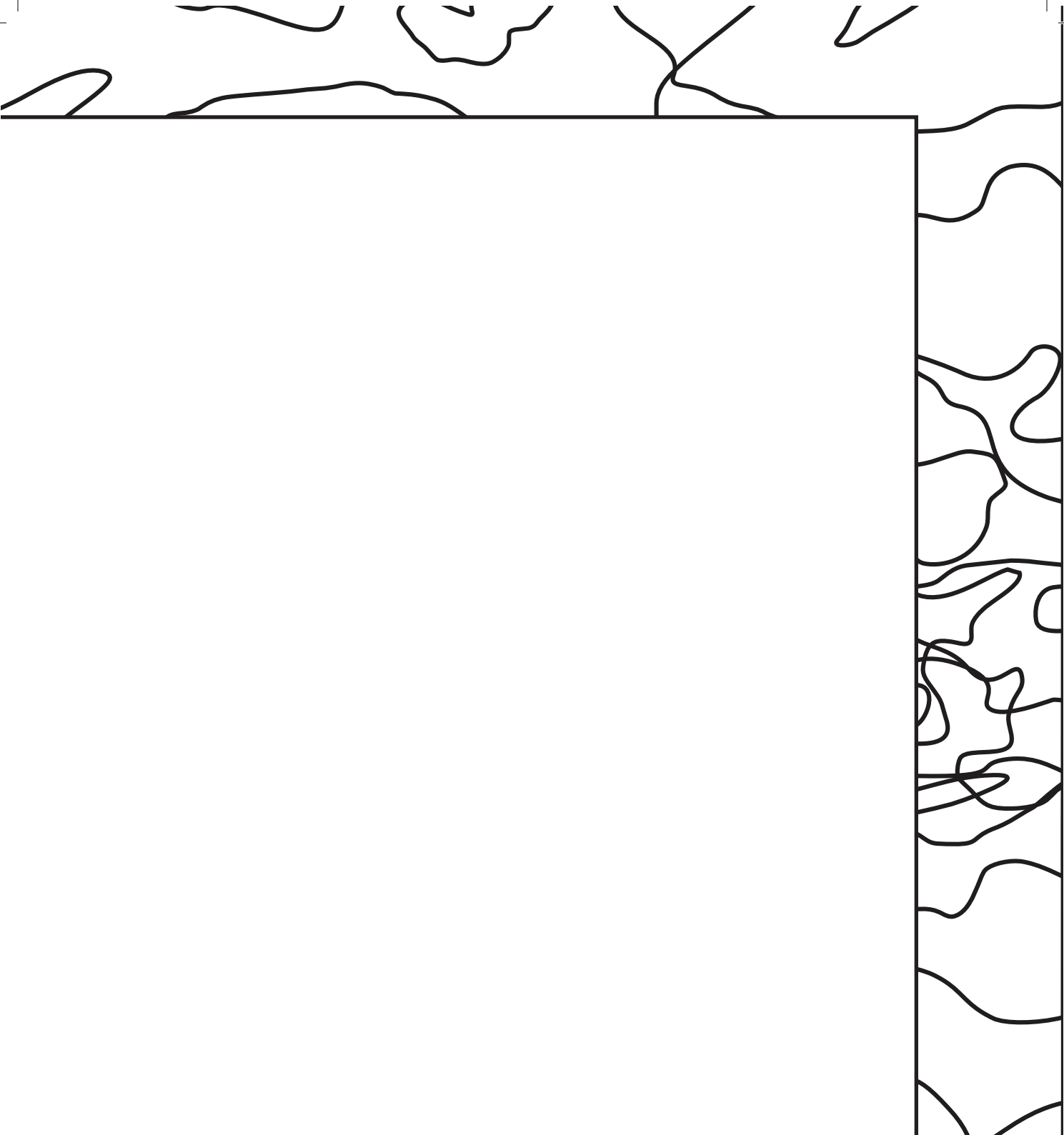
TALKING TO GOD

Lord, you never change.
You are the same faithful God
you always were. Help me to
trust you more. Amen.

Doodle Space



Master
Piece



God's great wonders

WEEK TWENTY

The Terrifying Beauty



*I will praise you, Lord, with all my heart and
tell about the wonders you have worked.*

Psalm 9:1

Sure, God created birds and puppies, flowers and rainbows. And they are all so cute and pretty! But God also created fire and lava and storms—terrifying things that show the magnitude of God's power.

When a man in the Bible named Job experienced immense suffering and lost everything he had, he begged God for a chance to talk to him face to face. Job felt it was unfair and wanted answers. Instead of telling Job why he experienced suffering, God answered with a lecture on creation. He peppered him with questions: *Do you control the lightning? Can you speak to the ocean? Do you move the sun and the moon?*

Why did God ask Job all these questions? It was to remind him of God's great power and wisdom. It's like God was really asking, "Knowing who I am, do you trust me?" When Job realized this, he fell down in awe and had no words to respond. Still, God recognized Job's faith and restored to him all he had lost.

Read those questions again, in a loud voice, imagining God asking you these questions. God's wonders remind us of how great God is . . . and how small we are. The terrifying beauty of volcanoes, avalanches, and tsunamis aren't meant to scare us, but rather to help us live in obedience and respect toward God, giving him the honor he deserves.

Master
Piece

***Terrifying things in nature show us how great and
powerful God is—both in his strength and love!***

Spiritual Fitness Training

Spending time thinking about God's wonders can change your perspective on your problems. Knowing how powerful God is reminds you he can handle whatever you ask. Knowing how creative God is reminds you he can help you discover unique ways to face life's challenges. Start this week by setting aside just 10 minutes to sit outside and observe his creation. From the vast sky above to the tiny clover hiding in the grass . . . praise God for all of his creation, including you! And then tell him about any problems you're going through. He cares and will help you find a way to get through.



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Job 42:2

☐ Acts 17:24–25

☐ Joel 2:30

☐ Romans 1:20

**Week
Twenty**

"I love to think of
nature as an unlimited
broadcasting station,
through which God speaks
to us every hour, if we
will only tune in."

—George Washington Carver, a
prominent African American scientist
in the early 20th century

Write Your Thoughts Here



DID YOU KNOW?

In 1994, the longest lasting storm known, Typhoon John, roamed the Pacific Ocean for 31 days. It traveled over 7,000 miles but did little damage as it barely touched land.

Living the Dream



Be completely faithful to the Lord your God, love him, and do whatever he tells you. The Lord is the only one who can give life, and he will let you live a long time in the land that he promised to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Deuteronomy 30:20

What do you want to do when you grow up?

Who do you want to be?

Those two questions are not the same. God is far more concerned with who you are. What's on the inside—your character—is something you take with you to any career you choose in life.

So who does God want you to be? He hopes you will be someone in love with him. Someone who chooses to stay faithful to him and obey him. Someone who trusts him. Someone who loves others and cares for them.

The amazing part is that God gives us the choice to become who we want. He doesn't want slaves. Even though he could, he won't force us to love him.

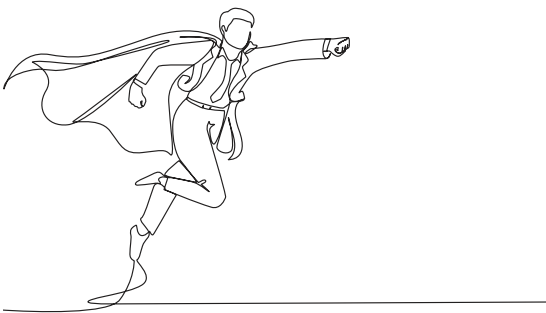
But when we choose to love God, we find the reward of life filled with love, joy, and peace—things that cannot be taken away or bought. And when times get tough, this life is filled with hope. Our relationship with God will carry us through this life and even after it, where we will be with God forever in heaven.

How you choose to live today matters greatly. Always remember, the God who loves you and made you is waiting, offering the best for you. Will you accept his invitation today?

Spiritual Fitness Training

Think about some of your real-life heroes. Maybe your parent, your youth pastor, your sports coach. What most impresses you about the lives of those you admire? How do you want to be remembered?

MY HEROES



ME



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Psalm 16:11 | <input type="checkbox"/> Matthew 10:39 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Proverbs 8:35–36 | <input type="checkbox"/> John 10:10 |

Week
Twenty
One

"The happiness which
God designs for his higher
creatures is the happiness of
being freely, voluntarily united
to him..."

—C. S. Lewis, British author, from
his book, *Mere Christianity*

Write Your Thoughts Here



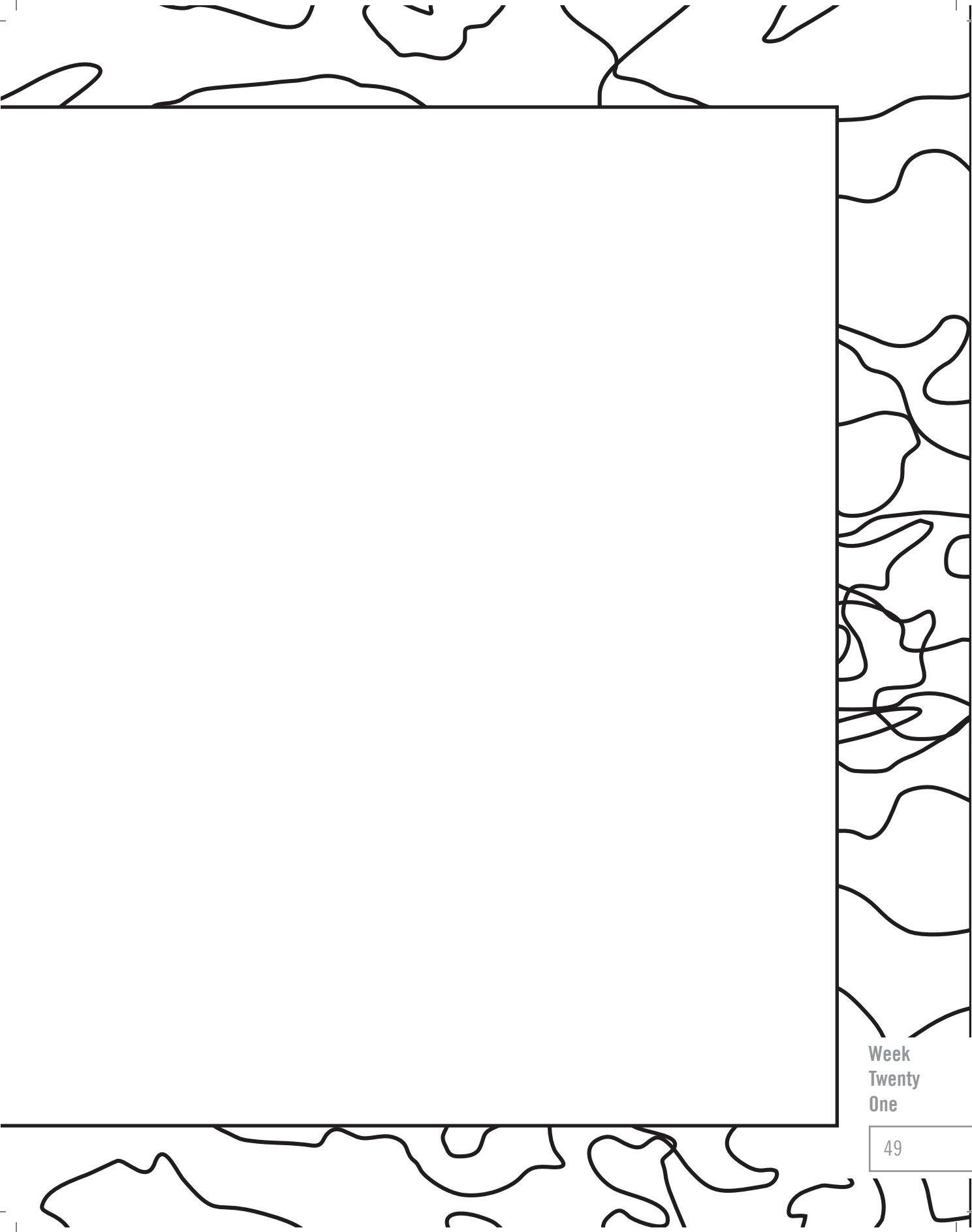
TALKING TO GOD

Thank you, God, for loving me
so much you give me the choice
to follow you. Help me live my
life for you every day. Amen.

Doodle Space



Master
Piece



Week
Twenty
One

God does the impossible

WEEK TWENTY-TWO

Hope for the Hopeless



Jesus replied, "There are some things that people cannot do, but God can do anything."

Luke 18:27

Anger, jealousy, lies, hatred . . . many are the sins that keep pulling us back in and holding us down. One little taste and suddenly we're drowning in it, feeling hopeless to ever find a way out. When we struggle with the same sin over and over, it's a sin cycle.

But God doesn't leave us in our sin. No case is too hard for him, no heart too cold, no person too far gone.

In the verses just before this week's key Scripture, Jesus talks with a man about what it takes to be saved. Although the man seemed to have it all together, he turned away from Jesus thinking he could not do what was required. Those who saw what happened seemed confused and thought, *If this man couldn't do it, who could?*

But Jesus assured them that *God can do anything*. He offers grace and gives the power to break free from sin cycles. This begins when we accept his offer of salvation, start a relationship with Jesus, and begin trusting him. For some it's cold turkey—they can stop their wrong actions right away and never go back. For many it's a daily process that requires us to work at it and be accountable to people. We mess up but keep on trying.

Can you trust God to help you break a sin cycle in your life? Go to him today, in prayer, and tell him about it. Nothing is impossible for God, and no one who trusts in him is hopeless.

No case is too hard for God, no heart too cold, no person too far gone.

Spiritual Fitness Training

One of the ways God helps us break free from sin is to give us a battle buddy to hold us accountable. Who can you talk to about your struggles? Do you have a friend, sibling, youth pastor, mentor, or parent who loves God and can act in this role for you? Can you check in with each other at a set time, like every Friday before school, or the first day of every month? Thinking ahead to have this support will help you break free from a sin cycle!

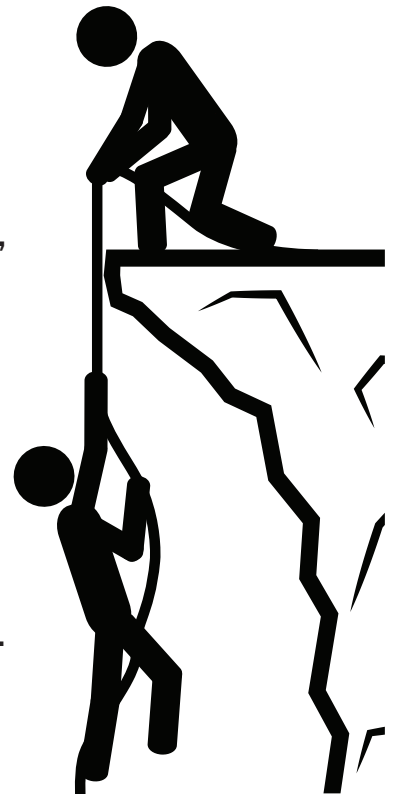
I confess my sins to Jesus, and he forgives me!

Nothing is impossible for him. I can also share my struggles

with my battle buddy, _____. When I feel tempted,
(name of a person)

I will _____
(specific things like pray, read this week's verses, or call your battle buddy)

My battle buddy will ask how I'm doing _____.
(when)



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Isaiah 59:1

☐ Ephesians 2:8–9

☐ Jeremiah 32:27

☐ Hebrews 12:1

**Week
Twenty
Two**

"You will argue with yourself that there is no way forward. But with God, nothing is impossible. He has more ropes and ladders and tunnels out of pits than you can conceive. Wait. Pray without ceasing. Hope."

—John Piper, American pastor and author

Write Your Thoughts Here



TALKING TO GOD

Lord, I've had a hard time breaking
free from a sin. Help me stand
strong against it in your mighty
power. And send me someone to
remind me that I can do it through
you! Amen.

powerful God

WEEK TWENTY-THREE

God of the Full Story



If you have to go to war, you may find yourselves facing an enemy army that is bigger than yours and that has horses and chariots. But don't be afraid! The Lord your God rescued you from Egypt, and he will help you fight.

Deuteronomy 20:1

Riots in cities and fights in school. Wars in the Middle East and battles in our homes. Viruses in our bodies and sadness in our hearts.

It seems evil is winning the battle for this world.

The good news is we can know the end of the story, and it is the triumph of all good—the triumph of God! The Bible assures us of his power to conquer it all. In this week's verse, God tells his people not to fear the coming battles because he is stronger than all the opposing armies. In that same way, we know we can count on him to ultimately win the wars against all evil.

Most of today's news headlines fill our mind with gloom and doom and the power of everything bad. But if we step outside and look up from our media, everything around us proves the power of God: the detail of the dancing honeybee telling its tribe where to go, the strength of a gathering storm, the breath of life in a baby's lungs. And when we read his words, we know he promises justice will be served.

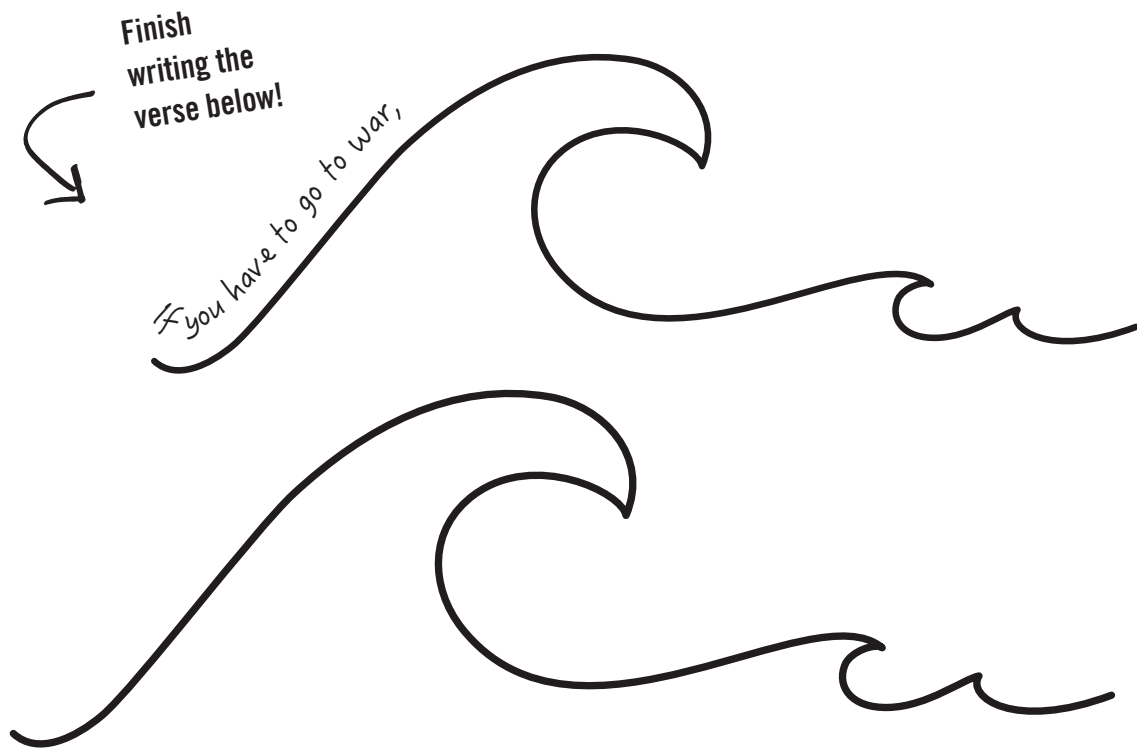
This week, if you feel yourself getting discouraged or fearful, bring your focus back to God. Ask him to help you see his power through his creation, through his people, through the Bible. Even though the news can be terrifying, find peace knowing the God of the full story.

Master
Piece

We can know the end of the story, and it is the triumph of all good—the triumph of God!

Spiritual Fitness Training

One way God reveals his power is through his Word. And when you memorize those words and hide them in your heart, you take that power with you wherever you go! Write this week's verse on the line below. Then revisit this verse throughout the week, read it aloud each time, and see if you can memorize the verse by the end of the week!



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Job 42:1-2

☐ Matthew 24:29-31

☐ Isaiah 40:10

☐ Revelation 22:12-13

**Week
Twenty
Three**

"The giant in
front of you is never
bigger than the God who
lives in you."

—Christine Caine,
Christian author and teacher
from Australia

Write Your Thoughts Here



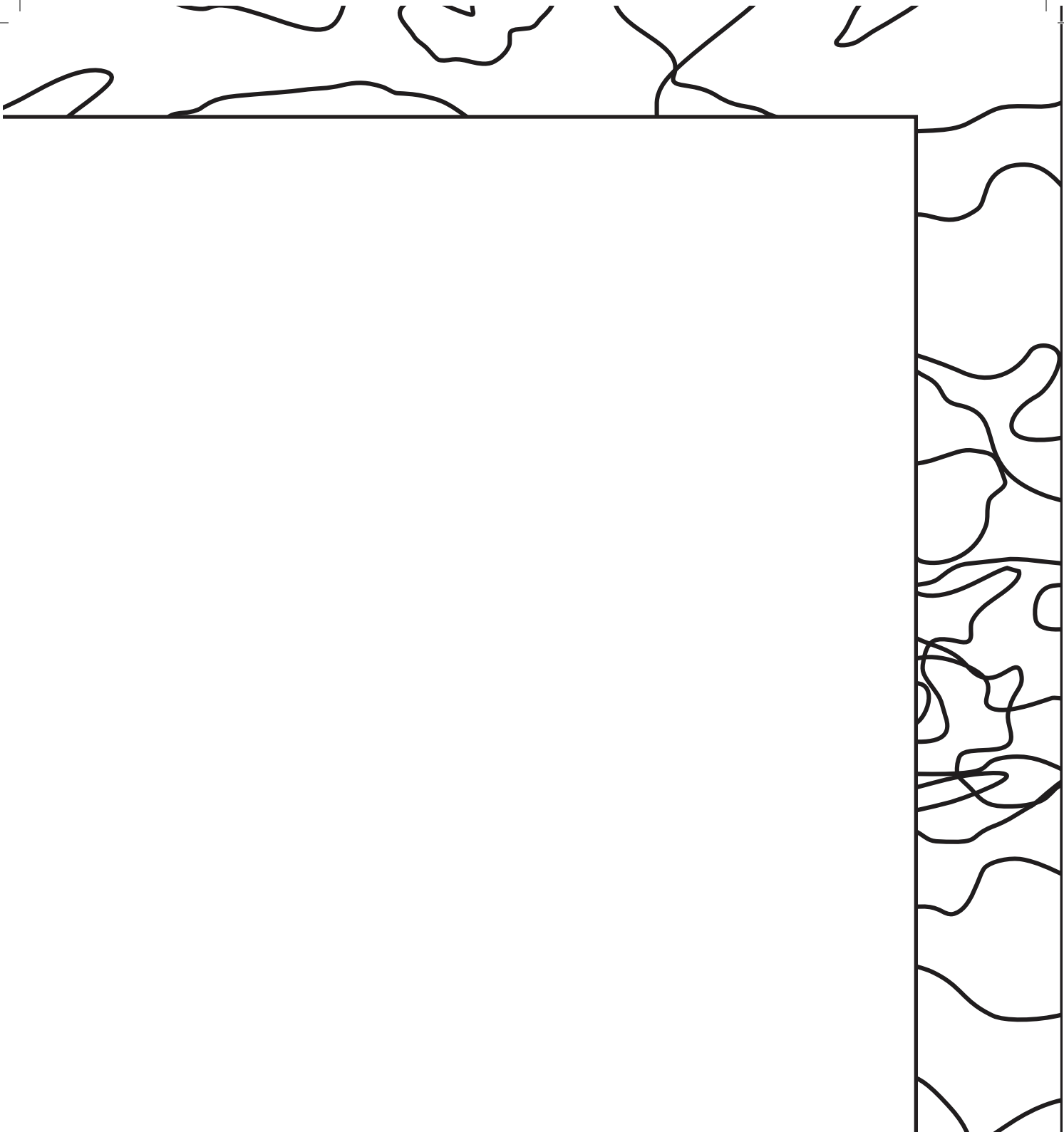
TALKING TO GOD

Lord, help me see your power all
around me. Help me know that good
will win against evil. Amen.

Doodle Space



Master
Piece



Week
Twenty
Three

god's help

WEEK TWENTY-FOUR

Fight the Fear of Failing



*I am the Lord All-Powerful. So don't depend
on your own power or strength, but on my Spirit.*

Zechariah 4:6b

Fear of failure. It keeps athletes from taking a shot, business executives from taking a risk, artists from showing their work. Who knows how many great talents are hidden because people are afraid of failure?

What's holding you back? Afraid you aren't good enough? Strong enough? Skilled enough?

In this week's verse, God sends a message to Zerubbabel, a governor in Israel. God wanted a relationship with the Israelites again. Part of making that happen was through the rebuilding of the temple where they could meet and worship, a huge task. God said it wouldn't be Zerubbabel's might or power that would do it, but that God's Spirit would help him get it done.

The bottom line, we are not strong enough or good enough to accomplish on our own the things God asks. We are human and we are going to fail. But God gives us hope. He will accomplish his plans using us. When he gives us a task to do, we need to start out—take the risk and a baby step—and his power will help us finish it.

What do you think God is telling you to do? Are you holding back out of fear? Are you willing to do the hard work he is calling you to do? God asks us to keep doing the next thing, keep taking the next step, and keep trusting him.

Master
Piece

***Fear of failure can hold you back.
God will help you try.***

Spiritual Fitness Training

What are the things you've wanted to do but didn't because you were afraid of failing? Make a list below. Then pray about it. If you feel God is pushing you to try something on the list, he will give you the power to try!

Write your ideas here!



Find a way to help a charity

Try out for the church worship band

Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Romans 8:26

☐ Galatians 4:6–7

☐ 2 Corinthians 12:9–10

☐ Ephesians 1:19–20

**Week
Twenty
Four**

"God's definition of success is really one of significance—the significant difference our lives can make in the lives of others. The significance doesn't show up in won-loss records, long resumes, or the trophies gathering dust on our mantels. It's found in the hearts and lives of those we've come across who are in some way better because of the way we lived."

—Tony Dungy, football player
and NFL coach

Write Your Thoughts Here



DID YOU KNOW?

The leafcutter ant can lift 50 times their own body weight, with their jaws. That’s like a human picking up a small elephant. . . *with their teeth!*

Jesus sends me

WEEK TWENTY-FIVE

Right Where He Wants You



*After Jesus had greeted them again, he said,
"I am sending you, just as the Father has sent me."*

John 20:21

Here's a mind blower: The huge, powerful, mighty God humbled himself to the point of being a helpless, crying baby. Jesus limited himself so he could walk with us, talk with us, be with us, and understand us.

Here's another mind blower: All other religions of the world are looking for God (some in a way of thinking, a crystal, or a statue). But Christianity points to a God who came looking for us.

That's right. *God came looking for you.*

When Jesus came, he taught people how to pray, how to forgive others and receive forgiveness, and how to relate to God. It was God's plan—send his Son to a no-name family in a small town of a nation suffering under the rule of a powerful empire. Not the best marketing strategy. And yet, Jesus changed the world!

And this is how he sends us: as humble people with little power or influence. But with him we too can change people's lives, and thus change the world. Jesus, through us, can heal the hurting, show impossible forgiveness, teach how to be in relationship with God himself.

You may never know why God put you here, at this duty station, at this school, around these people. But God placed you here in this season for a reason. Let him use you to make a difference in someone's life!

Master
Piece

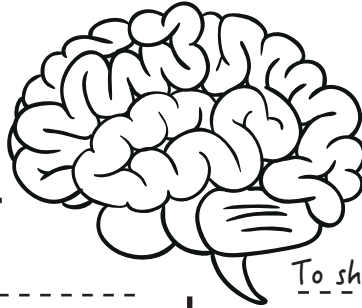
***With Jesus, you can help
change people's lives.***

Spiritual Fitness Training

Just like God sent Jesus to change the world, Jesus is sending you to change the world. You better believe it! Use the space below to brainstorm the places Jesus is sending you and why. Then this week, pray for God's help as you go to these places and do what he's calling you to do!

SEND ME TO...

WHY?



Example: School

To show God's love to bullied kids

Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Esther 4:14

☐ Matthew 9:38

☐ Isaiah 6:8

☐ Acts 1:8

**Week
Twenty
Five**

*"Better to have a small
role in God's story than to
cast yourself as the lead in
your own fiction."*

—LeCrae, American Christian rapper

Write Your Thoughts Here



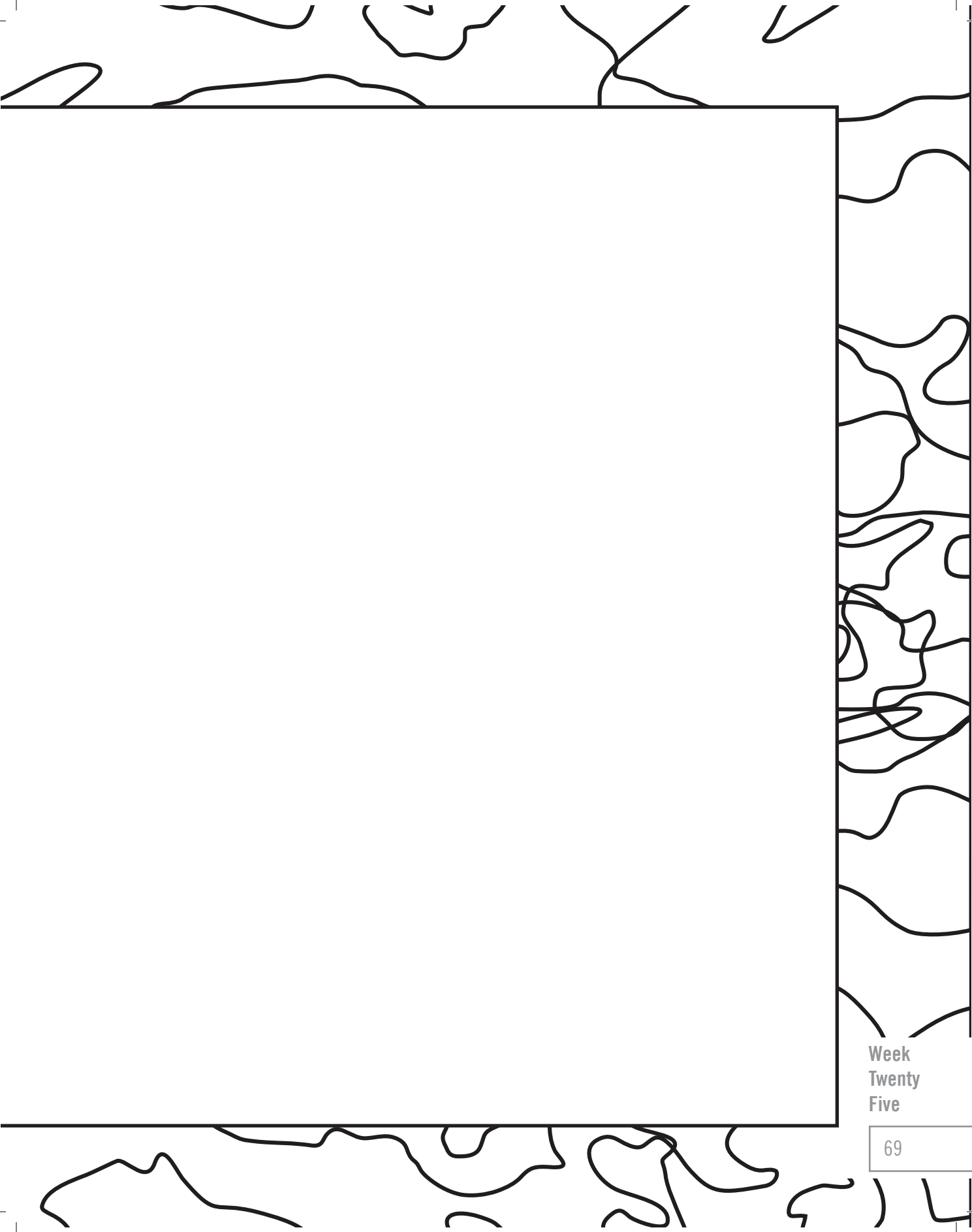
DID YOU KNOW?

Screech-owls purposely carry little, blind snakes to their nests to eat parasites that bother the owl babies. You might feel like a PCS is terrible, but God has a good plan!

Doodle Space



Master
Piece



Week
Twenty
Five

Where is God?



*Ask me, and I will tell you things that
you don't know and can't find out.*

Jeremiah 33:3

Where is God when you need him?

When you're trying to decide what to do. When it seems like the world is crashing. When you are so lonely, or anxious, or depressed you can hardly breathe.

How can you know that the God in heaven is paying any attention at all?

God promises he will be there for anyone who asks. He's never too busy. You are never too insignificant. He's never too high and mighty. You are never too sinful or bad. He's never forgetful or tired or weak. You have never been gone too long. You can know all of this because God said so in the Bible.

Sometimes we feel like God is silent or absent. We may need to change our expectations of how he acts. We may need to slow down our rushed lives so we can feel his quiet presence. We may need to learn to recognize his voice in a thought, a verse, a wise word from a friend, or a feeling.

If you ask for God to show himself, you will find him. And the more you practice seeing him around you, the more you will recognize his presence.

God is with you. He is listening. He is waiting. Will you talk to him today?

Spiritual Fitness Training

What do you think of when you hear the expression “the presence of God?” What does it mean to you that the mighty God says he is with you, right beside you? What does it mean to know he is listening when you pray to him? These are some big ideas, but they are also very true and very personal. God wants to be with you, and he promises he is! In the space below, write down how these ideas make you feel. Take time this week to simply be with God. He is waiting for you!

Write your thoughts here!



Keep It Going This Week *Find out more by reading these verses.*

☐ Proverbs 8:17

☐ Matthew 7:7–8

☐ Jeremiah 29:13

☐ 1 John 5:14

**Week
Twenty
Six**

"We Christians are
always in the presence of
God . . . Our awareness of
his presence may falter, but
the reality of his presence
never changes."

—Max Lucado,
American pastor and author

Write Your Thoughts Here



DID YOU KNOW?

There are areas in the ocean—called
doldrums—where there is no wind.

Ships with sails get stuck there
because the sails have nothing to
hold on to! You can't see wind, but it's
obvious when it's not there.

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DID YOU KNOW?

Keeping a journal has been shown to sharpen memory, increase IQ, relieve stress, and help with decision making. Why not make journaling a daily habit?

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Piece

Keep It Going! ↘

Your Fall Issue of Masterpiece will
arrive in the mail soon, so you can
continue discovering your unique design
through God's Word!

(Check your mailbox!)

