

Even so let your light shine before men; that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.

Matthew 5:16

An Educator's *LIGHT* Journal



Being an educator today is a monumental task. We are asked to fill many roles—teacher, parent, nurse, counselor. At the same time, most of us are bombarded with new initiatives, changing leadership, and shifting visions. Yet, God has placed us where we are for a reason. We are called to let our light shine.

Living in the Light

This is the message we heard from Jesus—and now declare to you: God is light, and there is no darkness in him at all. So we are lying if we say we have fellowship with God but go on living in spiritual darkness; we are not practicing the truth. But if we are living in the light, as God is in the light, then we have fellowship with each other, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, cleanses us from all sin. 1 John 1:5-7

And we can be sure that we know him if we obey his commandments. If someone claims, “I know God,” but doesn’t obey God’s commandments, that person is a liar and is not living in the truth. But those who obey God’s word truly show how completely they love him. That is how we know we are living in him. Those who say they live in God should live their lives as Jesus did. 1 John 2:3-6

If you think teaching is a monumental task, living our life as Jesus did is even more colossal. But there is good news! We don’t have to go at it alone. A daily dose of Jesus through his Word and prayer will provide the courage, discernment, knowledge, and humility we need. One word of caution should be mentioned. If you have not accepted Jesus into your heart, you won’t have access to this power I am referencing. Turn to the back of this journal to read how to take this step.

As you set aside quiet time to spend with God each day, we will focus on the different aspects of the Christian walk inspired by Matthew 5:16.

Love
Instruct
Glorify
Harvest
Thank

This journal is only meant to be a starting place.

- A place to write your thoughts and reflections as the Holy Spirit speaks to you through God’s Word.
- A place to commit to God’s promptings.
- A place to thank Him for who He is and what He is doing in your life.
- A place to become more like Jesus.

But whenever someone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. “For the Lord is the Spirit, and wherever the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. So all of us who have had that veil removed can see and reflect the glory of the Lord. And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like him as we are changed into his glorious image. 2 Corinthians 3:16-18



Organization

This journal is organized for a 10 week time period to provide encouragement and support during a typical school year. The following acrostic based on Matthew 5:16 will be our guide.

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Each week will include the components listed below.

- **Bible Passages:** God's Word must be our guiding light. 2 Timothy 3:16-17(NIV) tells us, "*All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.*" Apart from God's Word, we have no direction.
- **Acrostic Reminder:** While reading the passage, listen to what God is speaking to you. The acrostic (LIGHT) taken from Matthew 5:16 is intended to be a guide. However, if His voice leads you in a different direction, by all means go there. God has an individual word for each of us when we take time to be still and listen.
- **Reflection Opportunities:** Take time to write down your thoughts. How are you feeling? What is God saying to you? Talk to God during this time. Share your frustrations, your hopes, your questions with Him. He is listening. Take action. What is God asking you to DO today? Don't fall into the trap of thinking if the "DO" isn't a huge task, it isn't important. Simply be obedient to what God has placed on your heart. Obedience is how we show God we love him. It isn't a "have to", it is a "want to". God only wants what is best for us. Being obedient is the best thing we can do.
- **Homework:** This is a journal for educators. There has to be homework! Revisit the journal throughout the week. Record your prayers, thoughts, reflections, questions, and victories!

.....overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. **Romans 8:37**



LIGHT

You might wonder where the acrostic “LIGHT” came from. All I can tell you is that God placed this on my heart as I sought his guidance for the first VEM event: IGNITE. These are the words God gave me. I am sure one could easily come up with different words, but for me it was clear that these words (not all inclusive) help provide a frame for fulfilling Matthew 5:16. I must admit I had to work a bit on parallelism, but God took care of that too. It is my prayer that you will draw near to Him in the pages of this journal.

Love. The chorus to an old familiar hymn, *We Are One in the Spirit*, sums up why love is the first word in our acrostic.

*And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our Love,
Yes they'll know we are Christians by our love.*

Love is woven all throughout the Scripture. It is hard to read for very long and not read about love. Most are familiar with these words from I Corinthians 13:1-3, 13.

“If I could speak all the languages of earth and of angels, but didn’t love others, I would only be a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophecy, and if I understood all of God’s secret plans and possessed all knowledge, and if I had such faith that I could move mountains, but didn’t love others, I would be nothing. If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it; but if I didn’t love others, I would have gained nothing... Three things will last forever—faith, hope, and love—and the greatest of these is love.”

As we delve into this type of love—agape love—may we grow in our love for God, our love for others, and our love for the lost. We love because He first loved us.

Instruct. A familiar phrase I have heard spoken from the pulpit is, “You may be the only Bible some people read.” Many Christians are attempting to live a Godly life without knowledge of God’s Word. According to a Barna 2017 research study commissioned by the American Bible Society, only 20% of those surveyed read their Bible four times a week. Choosing to be ignorant of God’s Word means we are relying on ourselves. This is dangerous. We can’t enter into the daily battle with no protection. If we want to let our light shine and if we want to live victoriously, we must spend time in God’s Word.

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path. Psalm 119:105

Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, now that you have had a taste of the Lord’s kindness.

I Peter 2: 2-3

Anyone who listens to my teaching and follows it is wise, like a person who builds a house on solid rock. Matthew 7:24



Glorify. The first step in glorifying God is remembering WHO HE IS. Our human lens and the constant barrage of worldly definitions cloud our perceptions. God's Word tells us that He is Holy. He is Sovereign. He is Present. He is Powerful. He is Loving. He is Merciful. He is Good. He is Wise. He is Unchanging. He is Truth. Our view of God is directly related to our desire to bring Glory to Him and Him alone. When we truly embrace who He is and how this Almighty God loves us and wants to bless us, we will seek to bring Him glory in ALL things.

For everything comes from Him and exists by His power and is intended for His glory. All glory to him forever! **Romans 11:36**

Who is the King of glory? The LORD, strong and mighty, the Lord, mighty in battle. **Psalms 24:8**

I alone am the Lord your God. No other god may share my glory; I will not let idols share my praise. **Isaiah 42:8**

Harvest. Every Christian is on mission. Our schools and places of work are ripe for the harvest. Every day we are surrounded by children, parents, supervisors and colleagues who need to know the love, peace and joy that comes from knowing Jesus. When we see our places of work as opportunities to expose others to the gospel of Jesus Christ, we are fulfilling our purpose. The busyness and distractions of life will cause us to miss God-given opportunities. We must never forget why we are here.

This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. **John 15:8**

When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few." **Matthew 9:36-37**

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." **Matthew 28:18-20**

Thank. Taking time to be thankful and expressing gratitude is embraced by Christians and non-Christians alike. Focusing on the positive, choosing to be happy, having a growth mindset are commonly advocated by many, especially those in the self-help industry. But the thankfulness of a Christian goes deep. It begins with the saving grace we experience through the person Jesus and continues each day as God works actively in our lives. Thankfulness should characterize the life of a believer.

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the LORD is God. It is He who made us, and we are His; we are His people, the sheep of His pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. For the LORD is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations. **Psalms 100:1-5**



A Few More Things.....

Bond with Others

Seek out other Christian educators in your workplace. Ask them to join you in this journey. Meet together, share your insights, and pray for each other. We NEED each other (see blog post on victoriouseducator.com). God has uniquely placed you where you are. He has also placed others in your path. We are stronger together. Like it or not, we are in a battle. We know it is critical to arm ourselves with God's Word, but let's build an army of Christian educators to shine the light of Jesus in our schools.

Be the BEST You Can Be

Be aware that as you start this journey, Satan will go to work! He doesn't want you to let your light shine. He doesn't want you to be victorious. He will do everything he can to stop you. Hold on tight and don't compromise. Others will be watching.

*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. **Colossians 3:17***

Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.

Colossians 3:23-24

I recognize that we will fall short, and I am thankful for God's grace and mercy when we do. However, we honor God when we work hard and be the best we can be. If you want a good model, check out the book of Daniel. Daniel's desire was to honor God in all he did. As a result, God blessed him with knowledge, discernment, and provision. Daniel served an ungodly king in an ungodly nation, but God was glorified. The same God that did this for Daniel can guide and empower us as we serve in ungodly environments among ungodly people. I can think of no greater calling than to share and show the love of Jesus in our schools or educational settings. May God use you and bless you!

Scripture Memory

There are certain Scriptures that God has placed on my heart to recite throughout this project. Join me in committing them to memory. Write the verses on note cards or enter them into an app on your phone. Read them daily. You will be amazed at how God brings these verses to your mind at the perfect time.

- Matthew 5:16
- Luke 5:16
- Psalm 105:119
- Galatians 5:22
- Colossians 3: 23-24
- Proverbs 3:5-6
- 2 Timothy 1:7
- Ephesians 2:10

Let your LIGHT shine!



Week 1

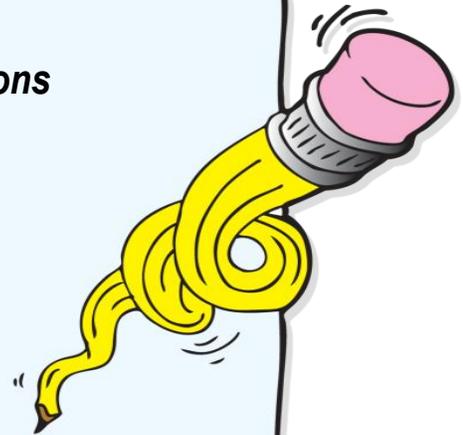
Bible Reading: Luke 15

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 1

Homework: Take time for prayer and reflection. How is God using you to let HIS light shine this week? Record your prayers, thanksgivings, reflections.

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Week 2

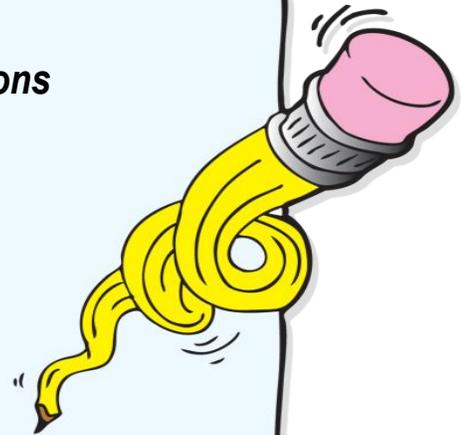
Bible Reading: Genesis 45

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 2

Homework: Take time for prayer and reflection. How is God using you to let HIS light shine this week? Record your prayers, thanksgivings, reflections.

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Week 3

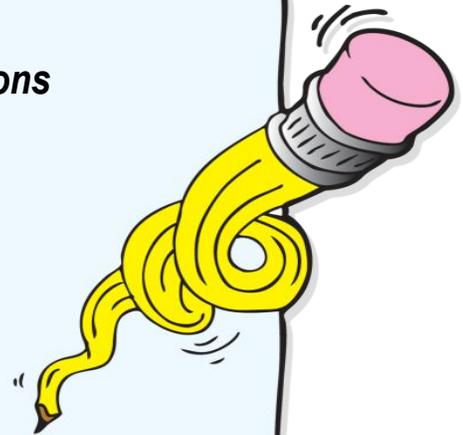
Bible Reading: Mark 6:30-45

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 3

Homework: Take time for prayer and reflection. How is God using you to let HIS light shine this week? Record your prayers, thanksgivings, reflections.

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Week 4

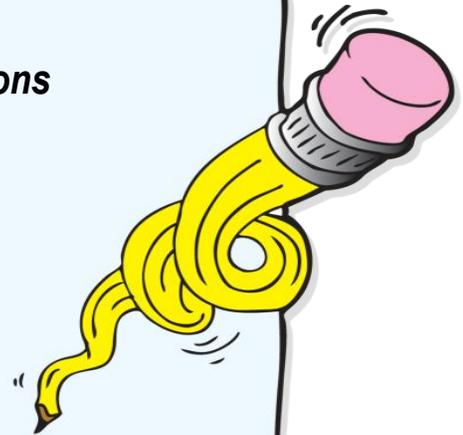
Bible Reading: Jonah 2-3

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 4

Homework: Take time for prayer and reflection. How is God using you to let HIS light shine this week? Record your prayers, thanksgivings, reflections.

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Week 5

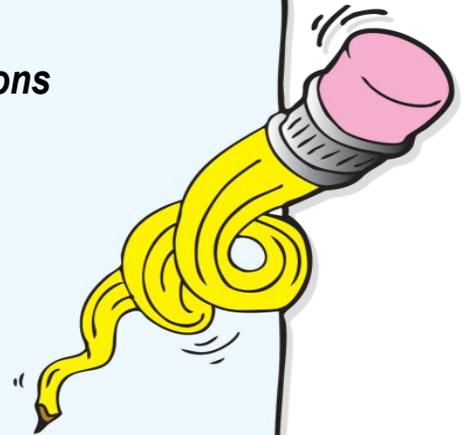
Bible Reading: John 4:1-42

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 5

Homework: Take time for prayer and reflection. How is God using you to let HIS light shine this week? Record your prayers, thanksgivings, reflections.

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Week 6

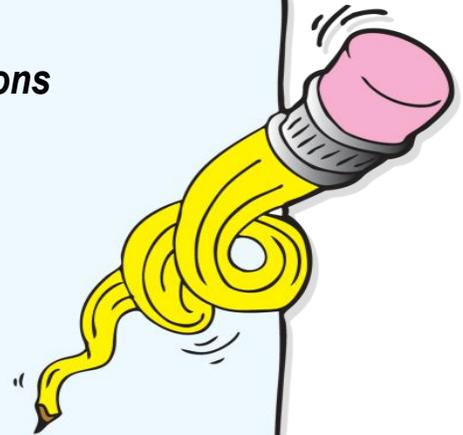
Bible Reading: Daniel 1

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 6

Homework: Take time for prayer and reflection. How is God using you to let HIS light shine this week? Record your prayers, thanksgivings, reflections.

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Week 7

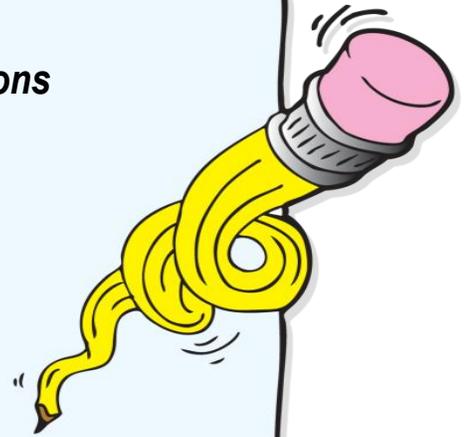
Bible Reading: Acts 5: 12-45

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 7

Homework: Take time for prayer and reflection. How is God using you to let HIS light shine this week? Record your prayers, thanksgivings, reflections.

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Week 8

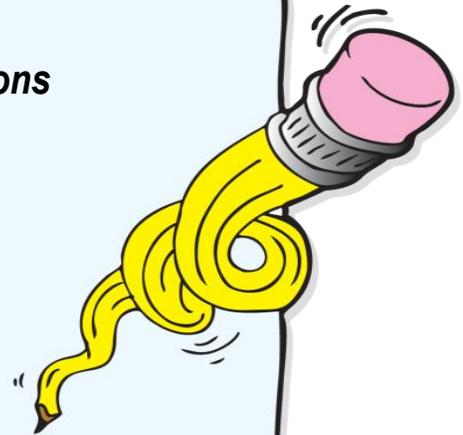
Bible Reading: Exodus 16

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 9

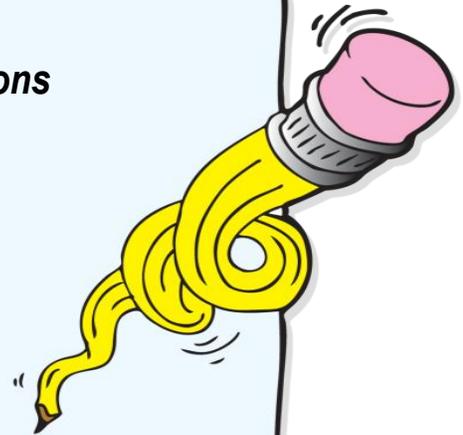
Bible Reading: John 14

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 10

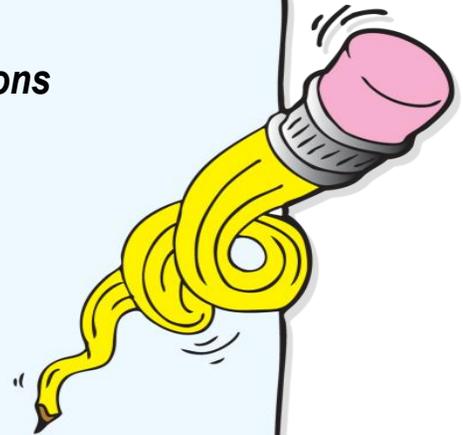
Bible Reading: Psalms 37 and Psalms 100

What is the Holy Spirit revealing to you through this passage?

- Love Instruct Glorify Harvest Thank

Check all that apply.

Thoughts	Actions



Week 10

Homework: Take time for prayer and reflection. How is God using you to let HIS light shine this week? Record your prayers, thanksgivings, reflections.

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Final Reflection:

Glance back over your notes from the past 10 weeks. Summarize your thoughts using our acrostic.

Love

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Thank





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Journal created by Dr. Jackie Minor

