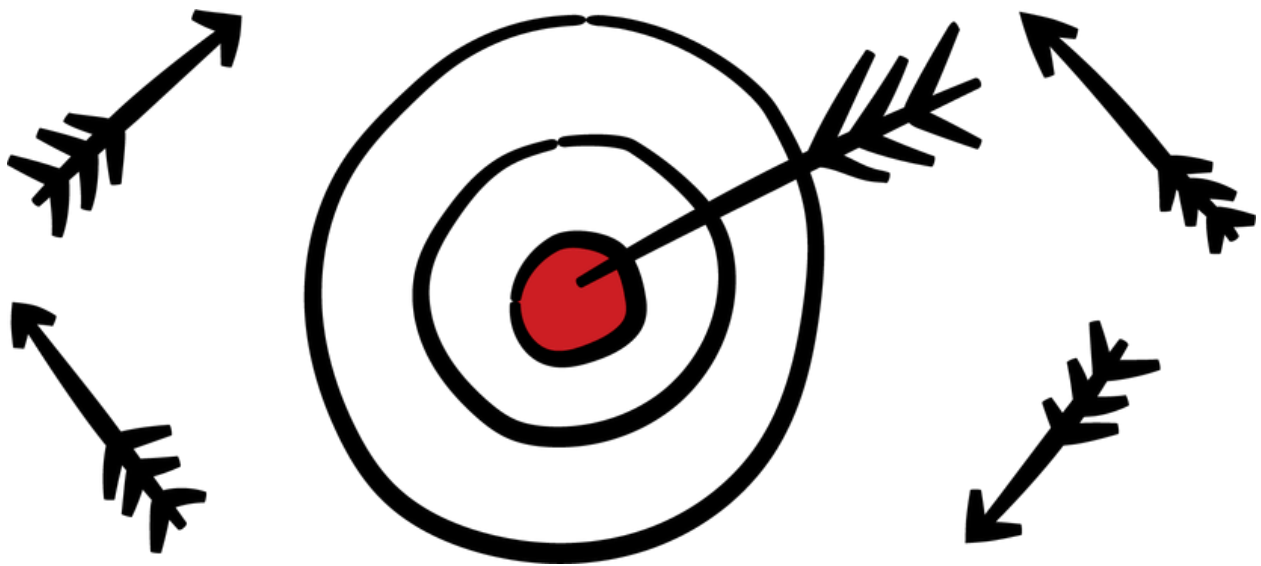


FROM RED LETTER CHALLENGE

BEING

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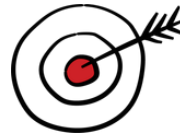


A 40-DAY CHALLENGE TO BE LIKE JESUS

ZACH ZEHNDER

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR TEENS

WEEK 1 | INTRODUCTION



BEING CHALLENGE

FROM RED LETTER CHALLENGE

teen

INTRODUCTION

We are about to embark on a 40-Day Challenge to Be Like Jesus called *Being Challenge*.

Before we begin our journey, take some time to go over the Group Promise together by reading it aloud. Make sure everyone understands the commitment.

GROUP PROMISE

I commit to these basic *Being Challenge* Group Promises. This is my “ALL IN” pledge to live out Jesus’ habits, both in my own life and in helping my Group do so.

- ➡ I will be on time and show up with my whole heart.
- ➡ Especially due to the nature of the content in *Being Challenge*, I understand that this Group is 100% confidential. Whatever is shared in the Group stays in the Group.
- ➡ I will respect other Group members by participating openly and speaking honestly, without dominating the discussions.
- ➡ I will not try to fix people, preach a sermon, or give unsolicited advice.
- ➡ When I share in the Group I will share primarily about myself and not about others.
- ➡ I will trust God to work in all of us as we explore the life and habits of Jesus together!

Icebreaker: We’ve all had good habits and bad habits, like biting our nails or spending too much time on screens. As you’re about to learn five life-changing habits of Jesus, what is a habit you wish you had in your life?

Charles Duhigg says that a keystone habit is “a habit that people introduce into their lives that can unintentionally carry over into other aspects.” So what is a keystone habit in your life, and how does it help you in other areas of your life?

WATCH BEING CHALLENGE SMALL GROUP VIDEO WEEK 1 - INTRODUCTION

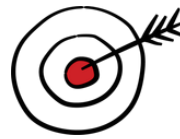
DISCUSSION

Craig Groeschel says, “Small disciplines done consistently lead to big results over time.”

In his book *Atomic Habits*, James Clear argues relentlessly for the power of small, daily wins. He challenges us to become 1% better each day.



WEEK 1 | INTRODUCTION



BEING CHALLENGE

FROM RED LETTER CHALLENGE

teen

DISCUSSION (CONT.)

Take the following scenarios and discuss what one small keystone habit you would put in your life if your goal was to:

- 1 Run a marathon
- 2 Lose 20 Pounds
- 3 Become debt-free

The goal of *Being Challenge* is to help you become a greater follower of Jesus Christ by introducing the keystone habits of Jesus Christ into your life.

Read the following passages from Matthew together:

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me— watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.” Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message)

Becoming more like Jesus should be how we respond to the Gospel.

That kind of love shocks us and wakes us up. It breaks down who we are and changes us from the inside out. So we can’t help but respond in that way.

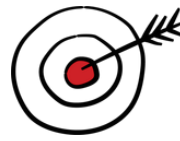
Being Challenge has identified five keystone habits that Jesus practiced in his life. We want these five habits to become the unforced rhythms in your life:

- 1 Committing to Community
- 2 Studying Scripture
- 3 Prioritizing Prayer
- 4 Seeking Solitude
- 5 Choosing Church

Take a look at the habits we’ll be learning more about over the next five weeks together. Thinking about your life right now, which one of these five will be the easiest for you? Which of the five do you expect to stretch you the most or be most difficult?



WEEK 1 | INTRODUCTION



BEING CHALLENGE

FROM RED LETTER CHALLENGE

teen

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Introduce a small, daily habit into your life this week and share it with the group. What do you hope happens in the next 40 days in your life through *Being Challenge*?

Examining the life of Jesus will change you, not because you have to, but because you GET to. Spend time praying for your group as you embark on the 40-Day Challenge together. Ask God for encouragement, strength, and perseverance to learn and implement the five habits of Jesus into your life.

CLOSING THOUGHT + PRAYER

Read 1 Timothy 4:7 (NASB)

“Discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.”

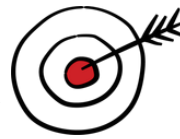
Read the following quote out loud together as a group: “Small disciplines done consistently lead to big results over time.” (Craig Groeshel) #BEINGCHALLENGE



Pray that God will open your heart and mind to see how you can be more like Jesus every day.

**For a deeper study and daily challenges to go alongside of the weekly small group experience, purchase Being Challenge: A 40-Day Challenge to Be Like Jesus at www.beingchallenge.com and read the Introduction and Days 1-5.*





DISCUSSION (CONT.)

- 1 Are you continuing to grow in wisdom? If so, in what ways are you growing in wisdom and where do you look to grow in wisdom? If not, what habits could you put into your life to intentionally grow in wisdom?
- 2 Describe what your current habits or rhythms look like when it comes to studying Scripture. What is going well? What could be going better?
- 3 Do you have a favorite Bible verse? If so, share with the group why it is your favorite.

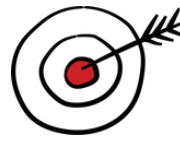
Knowing who you are impacts the way that you live. Another way to say it is, "Your biography comes out of your identity." You not only have an earthly family, but as we study Scripture, we find that we are born into a heavenly family with God as our Father! The following verses describe your identity in God:

- 1 **1 John 3:1a:** See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!
- 2 **Romans 8:14:** For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.
- 3 **Galatians 3:26-27:** So in Christ Jesus, you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.
- 4 **Galatians 4:4-7:** But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship. Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father." So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.
- 5 **Matthew 7:9-11:** "Which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!

God, our Father, adopts us as His sons and daughters. Through His grace, He makes us an heir. And He gives His children good gifts. As we seek to gain more wisdom in this world, hear these words from a wise man named Solomon who wrote many of the Proverbs contained in the Old Testament: **Proverbs 4:6-7 (MSG)** Above all and before all, do this: Get Wisdom! Write this at the top of your list: Get Understanding!



WEEK 3 | STUDY SCRIPTURE



BEING CHALLENGE

FROM RED LETTER CHALLENGE

teen

DISCUSSION (CONT.)

Rank yourself on a scale of 1-10 (where 1 is “very poor” and 10 is “excellent”) on how you feel you are doing at implementing this practice of studying Scripture in your life. Then, if comfortable, share that number with the group.

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Read the Gospel of John in the New Testament and write down three Bible verses that are meaningful to you. Memorize one new Bible verse from the Gospel of John. If you need a Bible, download You Version’s Bible App on your device.

CLOSING THOUGHT + PRAYER

Read James 1:5 together as a group. “If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you.” #BEINGCHALLENGE

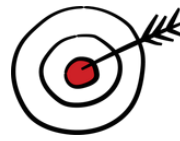


Spend time in prayer asking God for wisdom from above. Ask God to reveal who you are.

**For deeper study and daily challenges to go alongside of the weekly small group experience, read Days 13-19 of Being Challenge: A 40-Day Challenge to Be Like Jesus.*



WEEK 4 | PRIORITIZE PRAYER



BEING CHALLENGE

teen

INTRODUCTION

Ice breaker: Share with the group what type(s) of milk they would find in your fridge right now and why this type(s)?

Take some time to discuss the previous week's readings and challenges. Be honest about whether you did all, some, or none of the challenges. Challenges are not homework; they are opportunities. Completing them is not mandatory, but optional. You can still attend small group even if you didn't do any, but we challenge you to be honest about how you are doing with the challenges.

DISCUSSION

- ➡ Celebrate a "win" that you had in Being Challenge over the past week.
- ➡ Share a struggle.
- ➡ What did God reveal to you during the readings and challenges this past week?

WATCH BEING CHALLENGE SMALL GROUP VIDEO WEEK 4 - PRIORITIZE PRAYER

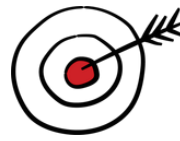
Think about the last three days. If God granted every prayer request you made, how would the world be different today? Would you get an A on that test? Would you have a great hair day, or would that guy ask you to the dance? Would any of your prayer requests impact others? Has God ever answered one of your prayers? If so, describe what happened to the group. Are there any unanswered prayer requests that you'd like to share with the group?

Read the following verses and talk about how Jesus prioritized prayer in each:

- 1 **Mark 1:35:** Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed.
- 2 **Luke 5:16:** But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed.
- 3 **Luke 6:12:** One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.
- 4 **Mark 6:41:** Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people.



WEEK 4 | PRIORITIZE PRAYER



BEING CHALLENGE

FROM RED LETTER CHALLENGE

teen

DISCUSSION (CONT.)

5 **Matthew 26:36, 39, 44:** Then Jesus went with his disciples to a place called

Gethsemane, and he said to them, “Sit here while I go over there and pray.” 39 Going a little farther, he fell with his face to the ground and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me. Yet not as I will, but as you will.” 44 So he left them and went away once more and prayed the third time, saying the same thing.

The above verses are just a small sampling of the times we see Jesus praying. We see Jesus praying alone, early, often, consistently, in nature, in solitude, overnight, before miracles, to offer thanksgiving, amid difficulty, and even when He doesn’t like what’s ahead. Prayer was always a priority in the life of Jesus in all circumstances. Describe what your current habits look like when

it comes to prioritizing prayer. What is going well? What could be going better? Do you believe there is power in prayer?

Rank yourself on a scale of 1-10 (1 is “very poor” and 10 is “excellent”) on how you feel you are doing at implementing this practice of prioritizing prayer in your life. Then, if comfortable, share that number with the group.

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Make prayer the very first thing you do every day of this week. Whether it’s for one minute, five minutes, or one hour, do nothing without talking to God first. You may need to set a reminder. That reminder could be on your phone or a sticky note on your backpack or showerhead. If you want assistance on how to pray or a tool to help you stay consistent in your prayer, please download the Echo Prayer App.

CLOSING THOUGHT + PRAYER

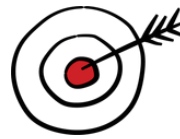
Read James 5:16 together as a group. “The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” #BEINGCHALLENGE   

Spend time as a group praying for the requests that were mentioned earlier and close with the Lord’s Prayer together.

**For deeper study and daily challenges to go alongside of the weekly small group experience, read Days 20-26*

of Being Challenge: A 40-Day Challenge to Be Like Jesus.





INTRODUCTION

Ice breaker: Okay, time to draw battle lines! Apple or Android. Pick one and explain.

No matter which one you picked, now that we've battled let's get vulnerable. Both Apple and Android allow their users to check the amount of screen time they have used.

If you're comfortable, share with the group how many hours/minutes per day you have used your device for the past day/week, and then defend yourself on why that's okay. If you are able, share how many times you picked up the phone in the past day/week and notifications in the past day/week.

Take some time to discuss the previous week's readings and challenges. Be honest about whether you did all, some, or none of the challenges. Challenges are not homework; they are opportunities. Completing them is not mandatory, but optional. You can still attend small group even if you didn't do any, but we challenge you to be honest about how you are doing with the challenges.

DISCUSSION

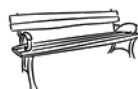
- ➡ Celebrate a "win" that you had in Being Challenge over the past week.
- ➡ Share a struggle.
- ➡ What did God reveal to you during the readings and challenges this past week?

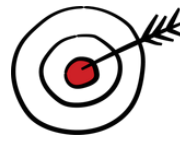
WATCH BEING CHALLENGE SMALL GROUP VIDEO WEEK 5 - SEEK SOLITUDE

Note some of the times and places in Mark's Gospel in which Jesus sought solitude in His life:

MARK 1:12-13 in the wilderness MARK 1:16, 2:13 walks by the lake	MARK 1:35 Early in the morning in a solitary place MARK 4:35-41 On the water in the midst of a storm	MARK 6:46-47 on the mountainside MARK 14:32 In the Garden of Gethsemane
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Not only did Jesus seek solitude in many different times and places. He also sought solitude before, during, and after many major life events. Before He began His 3-year ministry, He spent 40 days in the wilderness. (**Matthew 4:1-11**)





teen

DISCUSSION (CONT.)

Before He decided who the 12 disciples would be, He spent time alone overnight with God on a mountainside praying. **(Luke 6:12-16)** He grieved His friend and cousin, John the Baptist, after he was martyred for His faith. **(Matthew 14:13)** In the Garden before enduring His crucifixion, He prayed alone 3 times. **(Matthew 26:36-46)**

Describe what your current habits look like when it comes to seeking solitude. What is going well? What could be going better? What is keeping you from spending time in solitude with God?

Read Luke 8:40-56

Many people today will describe their lives as busy. Was Jesus busy? If yes, how do you see that busyness played out in this story? Is there a difference between being busy and hurried? Was Jesus hurried? Are you busy or hurried?

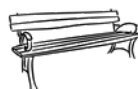
Jesus had an extremely busy life. He was a very wanted man. Crowds continually followed Him, pressed in on Him, and made requests of Him. And yet, in the midst of all the busyness, Jesus was never too hurried that He missed out on the one person that needed Him in that moment. Solitude with God allowed Jesus to stay focused on the mission God called Him to. God has also called you to live on mission for Him.

Read Hebrews 12:1-3

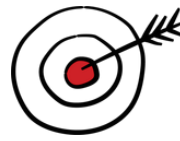
Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, 2 fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him, he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Pastor Zach said last week that prayer allows us to connect to God in a confusing world, while solitude will enable us to disconnect from a loud and distracting world. #beingchallenge  

Agree or disagree?



WEEK 5 | SEEK SOLITUDE



BEING CHALLENGE

FROM RED LETTER CHALLENGES

Teen

DISCUSSION (CONT.)

What could the practice of solitude look like in your life in the upcoming week?

Rank yourself on a scale of 1-10 (1 is “very poor” and 10 is “excellent”) on how you feel you are doing at implementing this practice of seeking solitude in your life. Then, if comfortable, share that number with the group.

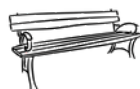
CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Go unplugged for an entire day in the upcoming week. In that day, spend some alone time with God.

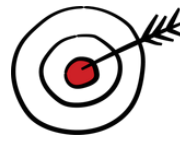
CLOSING THOUGHT + PRAYER

Close by spending five minutes together in silence. In that silent time, each person can pray that God would reveal more clearly the race He’s called you to run, that He would give you focus to run the race, and that He would also reveal any distractions that may hinder you from running well.

**For deeper study and daily challenges to go alongside of the weekly small group experience, read Days 27-33 of Being Challenge: A 40-Day Challenge to Be Like Jesus.*



WEEK 6 | CHOOSE CHURCH



BEING CHALLENGE

FROM RED LETTER CHALLENGE

Teen

INTRODUCTION

Ice breaker: Discuss with the group your favorite fast-food burger you've had. Not fancy. Not even fast-casual. What made it the best?

Take some time to discuss the previous week's readings and challenges. Be honest about whether you did all, some, or none of the challenges. Challenges are not homework; they are opportunities. Completing them is not mandatory, but optional. You can still attend small group even if you didn't do any, but we challenge you to be honest about how you are doing with the challenges.

DISCUSSION

- ➡ Celebrate a "win" that you had in Being Challenge over the past week.
- ➡ Share a struggle.
- ➡ What did God reveal to you during the readings and challenges this past week?

WATCH BEING CHALLENGE SMALL GROUP VIDEO WEEK 6 - CHOOSE CHURCH

Can you have a solid, growing relationship with God without the church?

In the time when Jesus lived, the people assembled in either a temple or a synagogue. In all four Gospel accounts, on several different occasions, it is mentioned that Jesus was found at the temple or synagogues on a daily basis (**Matthew 26:55, Luke 19:47, Luke 21:37, Luke 22:53, John 18:20**).

Read Matthew 16:15-18

Not only did Jesus regularly assemble as the church, but He instituted the church in Matthew 16.

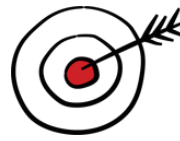
- 1 Why would Jesus put this habit into His life?
- 2 Describe your church experience in the past. How has the church helped or hurt you in your pursuit of following after Jesus?

Zach said that while churches may look different from one another, the one thing the Church, when it assembles, should always get right is the proclamation of the Good News of Jesus Christ.

Agree or disagree?



WEEK 6 | CHOOSE CHURCH



BEING CHALLENGE

teen

DISCUSSION (CONT.)

Has the good news of Jesus Christ changed or made a difference in your life? Explain.

Consider the following statistics and trends regarding choosing church in America:

- 1 Gallup shows that in 2019 only half (50%) of American adults are church members, down from 70% in 1999.
- 2 George Barna in his book *Revolution*, from 2005, claims that there were 20 million born-again Christians in the USA for whom the primary means of spiritual experience and expression is not the local church, and that by 2025 there will be 70 million such persons.
- 3 Ed Stetzer in his book *Lost and Found* discovered that 90% of 20-29-year-olds and 88% of 30+ year-olds believe they can have a good relationship with God without being involved in a church.
- 4 Can you give an example of someone that you know that has stopped attending church and has grown in their relationship with Jesus?

Carey Nieuwhof says, “Christians who attend church casually usually have a more casual commitment to their faith. Infrequent attendance is often a sign of diluted devotion. Church attendance does not equal engagement, but engagement almost always involves church attendance.” Agree or disagree?

- 1 Describe your current habits when it comes to choosing church. What is going well? What could be going better?

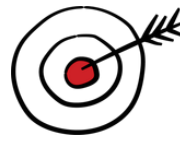
Rank yourself on a scale of 1-10 (1 is “very poor” and 10 is “excellent”) on how you feel you are doing at implementing this practice of choosing church in your life. Then, if comfortable, share that number with the group.

CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

Attend church each of the following four Sundays and invite someone who needs to hear the Good News of Jesus Christ to come with you.



WEEK 6 | CHOOSE CHURCH



BEING CHALLENGE

teen

CLOSING THOUGHT + PRAYER

Read Hebrews 10:24-25: 24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 25 not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another — and all the more as you see the day approaching.

Read the following quote out loud together as a group: “Church attendance is as vital to a disciple as a transfusion of rich, healthy blood to a sick man.” (D.L. Moody)

#BEINGCHALLENGE   

Spend time praying that more people would hear and receive the Good News of Jesus Christ and be forever changed. If you are connected to a local church, please pray for your church and its leaders.

**For deeper study and daily challenges to go alongside of the weekly small group experience, read Days 34-40 of Being Challenge: A 40-Day Challenge to Be Like Jesus.*



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