

**Digging Deeper**

# **romans & james**

## **STUDY guide**

This book contains daily devotional readings, a prayer journal and individual study plans designed to help quizzers get the most out of their Bible Quizzing experience.  
A great companion to the *Digging Deeper Review Questions Book*.

Exclusively from  
The logo for ACME Quiz Products features a stylized mountain range or pyramid shape composed of several parallel lines of varying heights on the left side. To the right of this graphic, the word "ACME" is written in a large, bold, sans-serif font. Below "ACME", the words "QUIZ PRODUCTS" are written in a smaller, all-caps, sans-serif font, separated by spaces.

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# DIGGING DEEPER SERIES

## **STUDY GUIDE** **ROMANS & JAMES**

Produced for ACME Quiz Products  
by iDEA Publishing Company

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# Committed To My Success

*It is my desire to make this year in quizzing successful in every way: in competition, understanding of the Word, and a closer walk with God.*

*To achieve this, I commit myself to the following study plan:*

*\_\_\_\_\_*  
*(Study plan 1, 2, or 3; learn memory verses, memorize text, daily devotions, etc.)*

## *A Cloud of Witnesses:*

*As parent, I commit myself to actively support and encourage my teen's study of God's Word. I will do what I can to help with study at home and will attend at least one quiz meet this year.*

*signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_*

*As coach, I commit myself to be prepared for quiz practices and to foster an environment where quizzing and learning God's Word are enjoyable.*

*signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_*

*I realize that anything worthwhile takes effort. I commit myself to do my best to follow through on my study plan. I allow myself to be accountable to my parents, my coach, and to God. I am thankful that they love me and want me to succeed in this area of my life.*

*signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_*

## Overview Of The Digging Deeper System

The *Digging Deeper Series* of study aids was designed specifically for Teen Bible Quizzing. Using these tools will help you get the most out of quizzing – both in gaining knowledge, and in helping you put that new knowledge into practice (the ultimate goal of your study).

This Study Guide is the cornerstone of the *Digging Deeper* system. It includes daily devotionals, three levels of daily study plans, and a devotional journal. It is the foundation of an effective study plan and for helping you make a daily walk with our Lord Jesus a reality. In this book, you will be challenged to think about the Word, and then put your newfound insights into action.

The Review Questions book is an integral part of the *Digging Deeper* system. It includes all of the review questions needed to complete any of the three levels of study plans in this *Study Guide*. There are about 500 unique questions for each of the three levels and there are 1000 additional questions included as supplements. In total, the *Review Book* has about 2500 questions – plenty for a thorough coverage of the material.

The QuizMaster computer software has become the standard for effective question study and review. Like the *Review Questions* book, it too contains each of the questions from the *Study Guide's* three study plans, and a significant number more. In fact, it contains the largest collection of questions that we offer. Featuring many tools for question study, review, and printing, it is a wonderful tool for those who have a computer, and invaluable for helping the coach prepare study material for practices.

Help your quizzers learn their quotes and watch them soar. Our Quote System includes flashcards with the memory verse on one side and the reference on the other, an audio CD with each verse read aloud, and a booklet with study plans and techniques, prejump lists, progress chart, and more.

And finally, the Dramatized Audio CD will bring the text to life. Also tied to the daily study plans of the *Study Guide*, each character in the text is read by a different dramatic voice. The more senses you involve in the learning process, the better you learn; and being able to hear the Word dramatized is a big help in retaining the Scripture. This CD is especially useful for auditory learners and younger quizzers.

We pray that your study of God's Word this year will be a rewarding adventure, full of new insights and challenges, and that you will take the time to let God change you – not only your mind, but your heart as well.

May you grow in the knowledge and understanding of God's grace.

**Your friends at ACME Quiz**

## Getting The Most Out Of Bible Quizzing

Often you will hear people say that “learning God’s Word and applying it to your life” is the most important goal of Bible Quizzing. But sometimes it is hard to see this goal being realized when so much emphasis is put on the competitive aspect of quizzing. This is not really anyone’s fault. Available study material has been mostly centered on learning questions (for example, question books, lists, concordances, etc.). And because practices are rarely long enough, it is hard to spend a lot of time digging into the Word.

The only way, really, to accomplish this goal of knowing God more fully through his Word is to spend time in personal devotion and prayer. And that is where this *Study Guide* comes in. As you follow the daily study plans to help you learn the material, you will also be reflecting on the Scripture in daily devotions. Each day’s devotional parallels the material that you are quizzing on, so it will be more relevant to you. If you are going to have a daily quiet time with God, doesn’t it make sense to base your devotions around the material you are quizzing on?

The devotionals have been designed to encourage reading, reflection, journaling, spiritual growth, and a strong heart of prayer. Let’s look at each of these disciplines in more detail:

### Reading

Each day’s devotional has a brief story to lead you into thinking about Scripture and its application to your life. Just as Jesus often taught in parables, the short stories will make the Scripture relevant with insights from today’s world.

### Reflect

Following the reading of the scripture passage and the introductory story, the devotionals encourage you to reflect and begin to think about how the Word can be relevant in your life.

### Journal

Journaling is a wonderful way to help the Word take root. By putting your thoughts on paper, you will be able to chart your progress and growth. You will be challenged to dig deeper, seeking God’s direction for your life. Don’t skip over this activity in your devotions.

### Grow

This is your opportunity to “DO”, and not just “LEARN”. James says, “Do not merely listen to the Word... do what it says.” In this part of the daily devotional, you will be challenged to do just that – take the seed planted in you and grow closer to God as you do his will and become what he created you to be.

### Pray

Each devotional is summed up with a simple prayer. Make that prayer the cry of your heart. Tell God how much he means to you and seek his face. Then watch as his Spirit comes alive in you.

This year, take quizzing to a whole new level as you explore what God has in store for you!

## Choosing Your Study Plan

Before you jump into studying, it is a good idea to take stock of your resources – to come up with a plan. This Study Guide includes three study plans suited for most skill levels. The one you choose will depend upon a number of factors: your skill and experience, your circumstances, your support system, and your desire. Let's look at these briefly by asking you some questions.

Skill and Experience: Do you know how to take a study plan and follow through with it? What kind of grades do you get in school? Have you ever quizzed before?

Circumstances and Available Time: Sometimes, but not always, older quizzers know how to make better use of their time. Do you have plenty of time to study? Do you have a job after school? Are you home-schooled? Quizzing takes time, and you want to take stock of the time that you have before you commit to any plan of study.

Support System: Think about your support system – your family and friends. Are they usually an encouragement, or a discouraging force? Will they help you reach your study goals, or will they drag you down? You want to be surrounded by people who will encourage you and are committed to your success.

Desire and Motivation: This is probably the most important factor in achieving success in quizzing. Are you self-motivated, or do you require someone to “push” you? Can you focus on a goal, or do you start things, but never finish them? Are you quizzing because you want to, or because your parents told you that you must... or because your friends are doing it?

The way you answer these questions should influence the decision you make about a plan of study. Let's look at the different study plans in this *Study Guide*:

Level 1 Study Plan (“Contributor”): By following this plan, you will be a consistent contributor to your team at quiz meets. You will gain a solid understanding of the material and should have a good idea of how to answer most questions. In addition to the time it takes to do your devotions, this plan is designed to take 15-20 minutes a day.

Level 2 Study Plan (“Top-20” Quizzer): This plan is designed to help you finish in the Top-20 in your district. By following it, you will have a solid knowledge of the material and should be able to answer almost any question. If you add memory verses to this study plan, you should finish in the Top-10 in your district. Commitment is 30-45 minutes a day.

Level 3 Study Plan (“National-level” Quizzer): This plan requires the greatest amount of daily study time, but will provide the greatest rewards. Following it should help make you a “national level” quizzing. You will want to supplement this plan with memory verses, or possibly memorization of the entire text. Commitment is 45-90 minutes a day.

There is not any “best” plan, only the plan that is best for you. You may want to sit down with your coach to supplement your study plan with additional study activities. Room in the daily study plans has been left to write in these activities each day.

After you have chosen a plan, make sure that you fill out the “Committed To My Success” certificate on page 2 and have a parent and coach sign it. Then photocopy it and put it on your refrigerator to remind you of what great things are ahead as you learn God's Word this year.

## Understanding The Daily Study Plans

All three of the daily study plans work the same way: each starts with a short devotional, and then lists specific steps to follow. To the left of each step is a check box () to check when you finish that step.

Careful thought has gone into providing a balance of new material and review of old material. By the time you finish your study plan, you will have gained a solid understanding of the material through systematic study and review. Let's look at a sample week's Level 3 plan for Chapter 7:

Sample Daily Plan	Explanation of what to do for each step of the study plan.
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily devotions <input type="checkbox"/> Read / listen to ch 6 (2x) <input type="checkbox"/> Read w/ reps 7:1-13 <input type="checkbox"/> Qs: ALL 7:1-13 ①②③ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Day 1. Study the daily devotional and see what God wants to teach you this day. To get an overview of the material, read chapter 7 twice, listening to the audio CD (if you have one). Then read again with repetition. Next, using <i>The QuizMaster</i> software, or a review questions book, study all of the Level 1, 2 and 3 questions for 7:1-13. Finally, if your coach gave you an additional study task, do that.
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily devotions <input type="checkbox"/> Read / listen to ch 7 (2x) <input type="checkbox"/> Read w/ reps 7:14-24 <input type="checkbox"/> Qs: ALL 7:14-24 ①②③ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Day 2. Start with your devotions, then read chapter 7 twice (again using your listening CD, if you have one). Then read with repetition 7:14-24. Use <i>The QuizMaster</i> to study all of the Level 1, 2, and 3 questions for 7:14-24. And finally, do any additional task your coach assigned.
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily devotions <input type="checkbox"/> Read / listen to ch 7 (2x) <input type="checkbox"/> Read w/ reps 7:25-53 <input type="checkbox"/> Qs: ALL 7:25-53 ①②③ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Day 3. Do devotions, read and listen to chapter 6 twice, read with repetition 7:25-53, and study ALL Level 1, 2 and 3 questions from 7:25-53. Finally, do any additional task your coach assigned.
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily devotions <input type="checkbox"/> Read / listen to ch 1-4 <input type="checkbox"/> Qs: 40 from ch 1-4 ①②③ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Day 4. Do devotions, read and listen to chapters 1-4, and then review 40 questions from chapters 1-4 using the QuizMaster software or a review question book. (Note that the first part of each week covers new material, then you review older material the last few days.) Finally, do any additional task your coach assigned.
<input type="checkbox"/> Daily devotions <input type="checkbox"/> Read / listen to ch 5-7 <input type="checkbox"/> Qs: 40 from ch 5-7 ①②③ <input type="checkbox"/> _____	Day 5. Do devotions, read and listen to chapters 5-7, then review 40 questions from chapters 5-7. Finally, do any additional task your coach assigned.

As you get into the year, you will notice that each week's study plan has a good balance of new and old material. Review is critical if you are going to learn the material well.

Study questions to complete the daily study plans can be found in one of two sources: *The QuizMaster* computer software or the *Digging Deeper Review Questions* book. Both are available from ACME.

Level 2 uses questions marked with a ① or a ② in the *Review Questions* book, or the Level 2 collection in *The QuizMaster*. Level 3 study sessions require questions marked with a ①, ②, or ③, or the Level 3 collection in *The QuizMaster*.

Additionally, Level 3 plans often suggest "Reading with reps". Repetition reading is a method of study where you read one verse, then read that verse and the next, then 1-3, 1-4, and 1-5. After five verses, you start a new pattern 6, 6-7, 6-8, 6-9, and then 6-10. After the second group, Re-read 1-10. Then start the next group: 11, 11-12, 11-13, 11-14, 11-15 and then 1-15. Continue in groups of 5 until you have covered all the material. Note: this is only one reading method; you should work with your coach to pick a method that is best for you.

Finally, don't worry if you miss a day. These study plans were designed for five days of study each week, so if you miss a day, you can easily make it up on another day. Just do your best to follow the plan, keeping your practices short, and not combining them. What you learn will stick with you much better if you develop this consistency.

# **DAILY DEVOTIONS & STUDY PLANS**

## Level 1 Plan

### Day 1

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1
- Qs: ALL R1:1-17 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 2

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1
- Qs: ALL R1:18-32 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 3

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1
- Qs: 25 from R1 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 4

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1
- Qs: 25 from R1 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 5

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1
- Qs: 25 from R1 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Level 2 Plan

### Day 1

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1 (2x)
- Qs: ALL R1:1-17 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 2

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1 (2x)
- Qs: ALL R1:18-32 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 3

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1 (2x)
- Write 10 Qs from R1
- Qs: 25 from R1 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 4

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1 (2x)
- Write 10 Qs from R1
- Qs: 25 from R1 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 5

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R1 (2x)
- Qs: 50 from R1 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Romans 1: Set Apart for Christ's Service

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile." (v. 16) — NIV

### Day 1: The Life of a Servant

**Reading:** Romans 1:1-7

As we begin our quest to more fully know God through his Word in Romans and James this year, we are all faced with a decision: master or servant. Will we keep control of our lives and attempt to be the master, or will we surrender to God and gladly be his servants? For Paul, the choice was servanthood to God. It's easy to see servanthood as a position lacking in honor, yet Paul had a clear understanding of just what an honor he had been given—the honor of leading others to a full understanding of Christ. Can there really be a higher calling than this?

Paul's life was totally and wholly consumed with serving Christ through the ministry of the Gospel. Nothing distracted him from that purpose. And Christ desires the same from us. He wants us to be completely his. And he has great career plans for all of us: servants of the King! So as you begin another (or perhaps your first) Quizzing year, allow God to make you, his servant, into everything he wants you to be through this study of his Word!

**Reflect** Think about what an honor you have to represent Christ to others. What are some ways that you represent Jesus to your friends and family? Do you take advantage of opportunities to share your faith, or does fear of rejection get in your way?

**Journal** In your journal at the back of this book, write down some ways you can represent Jesus to others this week and make a plan to act on them.

**Grow** Think about how you represent Jesus in your day-to-day life. If you were on trial for being a Christian, how much evidence would there be to convict you?

**Pray** "Lord, teach me your ways and help me to walk in them. Lord, I long to represent you to the world in such a way that they will desire you. Help me to be a true servant, representing the Master in all I do! Amen."

### Day 2: She said "Yes"

**Reading:** Romans 1:8-17

In 1999 in Columbine, Colorado, two students went into their high school and began murdering other students. One of these other students, Cassie Bernall, is said to have been asked whether or not she believed in God. She said "Yes" just before the trigger was pulled, ending her life. She refused to deny that she was a Christian even though this meant losing her life for the sake of Christ.

Cassie Bernall did not wake up on that fateful morning wondering what she would do if two madmen took over her high school and pointed a gun at her. How could you prepare for such an event? But hard times test our character, and it is in hard times that our inner beauty (or lack of beauty) shines through. Cassie had a love for Christ, and denying that love was not even an option to her. She said "Yes" because that was just an overflow of a heart committed to Christ. It was a gut reaction. Would we do the same?

**Reflect** What do you think would happen if you were ever in this situation? Would your gut reaction be to say "Yes"? In what ways does your life (in word and deed) say "I am not ashamed"?

**Journal** Reread verse 8 and journal how you make your faith known. Are you bold in representing Christ or is there a part of you that is a bit afraid, or perhaps even ashamed, of the gospel at times?

**Grow** Pray that you would have a faith that is bold, a faith that encourages, a faith that points people to God and brings glory to him.

**Pray** "Lord, I pray that my life will say 'Yes, I believe,' even when I speak no words. May I be an ever-constant witness to your gospel and live an unashamed life before you. Amen."

### Day 3: Paying the Price

**Reading:** Romans 1:18-23

We like to think of God as a God of love—a loving Father who wants what is best for his children. And to be sure, God certainly is that. He is loving beyond anything we could ever imagine. Yet he is also a righteous God, and his righteousness requires that there be a price for sin. In fact, God HATES sin. He hates it so much that he could not even look on his own Son as he hung on the cross.

Once we have heard the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, we have no excuse but to receive the truth and walk in its light. God makes it plain to us. We are made in his image and should not participate in the things he came to save us from. Flee from sin and really LIVE!

- Reflect** Is there anything in your life that is not pleasing to the Lord? Are you refusing to give it over to him even though you know it is not his best for your life?
- Journal** Reread the passage carefully. Think about a time when you made a choice that was not pleasing to God. What price did you pay for that choice? Journal your thoughts.
- Grow** We must ask God to give us spiritual eyes to see deep and wonderful things about his invisible qualities, his eternal power and divine nature. Keep your eyes open.
- Pray** *“Open my eyes Lord, I want to see Jesus, to reach out and touch him, and say that I love him. Open my ears Lord, and help me to listen. Open my eyes Lord, I want to see Jesus. Amen.”*

## Day 4: Truth or Consequences

**Reading:** Romans 1:24-27

Sally was a beautiful girl who felt God’s call on her life to be a youth pastor. Her friends shared her joy as she talked about how she would lead young people to Christ. It was her passion and she was excited that God had chosen her. Yet she tried to live with one foot still in the world, so-to-speak. She thought she could follow God’s path and seek the world’s pleasures at the same time. As a result, her passion faded, and the realities of living life in a sin-filled world began to take their toll on her. She had exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and like the wicked men and women of today’s passage, Sally was given over to the sinful desires of her heart.

The *TRUTH* is, God has a plan for each of us—a calling to live lives of holiness. The particulars of that plan may not yet be clear to you. But the foundation for all is the same: a life of obedience to the truth.

- Reflect** In what way could Sally’s life have been different? Do you think the painful events that began to happen in her life could be a result of God’s wrath concerning her choices?
- Journal** Journal about a time when you chose to walk away from God’s best for your life. What consequences did you face? Have you fully returned to his path for you? How could your situation have been different?
- Grow** Jesus said very specifically that the road that leads to life is narrow (Matthew 7:14). Do you think you are walking a narrow path of life, or are you taking the easier, broader road (that eventually leads to destruction?) Stand firm in your calling and turn toward the truth!
- Pray** *“Lord, help me to know your truth. Weed out any wicked thing in me, and help me to walk in holiness. Lead me on the path of righteousness! Amen.”*

## Day 5: Focus

**Reading:** Romans 1:28-32

Have you ever had a friend who was once a strong fellow-believer but then turned away from the faith? Unfortunately this is becoming all-too-common in the church, and will especially be something you’ll experience in your college and post-college days. These people are the hardest to witness to, show God’s love to and generally be around. Like the people in today’s reading, they know God’s righteous decree that says their sins deserve death. Yet they still choose the sin over his grace. They truly have a depraved mind.

People who have once been on fire for God and have chosen to walk away from him often make it their personal goal to slander God and his church as much as they can. And in today’s social media-rich society, these people have a much stronger voice in our lives. It is growing increasingly difficult to maintain a godly focus. Hebrews 12 tells us to *FIX* our eyes on Jesus (verse 2). This would imply that whatever is in our lives that takes our focus away from him needs to be let out of our lives. But staying in the Word and surrounding ourselves with good friends who have this same desire are good ways to keep our focus.

- Reflect** Reread verse 28. Why did God abandon these men and women? Is there any sin in your life that you are justifying?
- Journal** Journal ways you need to guard your heart more carefully. This will enable you to recognize how you might fall into sin carelessly if you are not on guard at all times. Remember: Focus!
- Grow** Think about ways you have refused to acknowledge God. Now that you understand what his Word says about those who do not acknowledge him, what changes do you plan to make in your life to ensure your focus is on Christ every day?
- Pray** *“Lord, train my heart and mind to be aware of the things that dishonor you. I desire to be a person of integrity. I want to take a strong stand for truth and flee from anything that will cause me to fall away from your best plan for my life. Amen.”*

### Level 3 Plan

- Day 1**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/listen to R1 (2x)
  - Read w/ reps R1:1-7
  - Qs: ALL R1:1-7 **123**
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- Day 2**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/listen to R1 (2x)
  - Read w/ reps R1:8-17
  - Qs: ALL R1:8-17 **123**
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- Day 3**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/listen to R1 (2x)
  - Read w/ reps R1:18-25
  - Qs: ALL R1:18-25 **123**
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- Day 4**
- Daily devotions
  - Read w/ reps R1:26-32
  - Qs: ALL R1:26-32 **123**
  - Write 10 Qs from R1
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- Day 5**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/Listen: R1 (2x)
  - Qs: 75 from R1 **123**
  - \_\_\_\_\_

## Level 1 Plan

### Day 1

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2
- Qs: ALL R2:1-16 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 2

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2
- Qs: ALL R2:17-29 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 3

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2
- Qs: 25 from R1-2 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 4

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2
- Qs: 25 from R1-2 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 5

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2
- Qs: 25 from R1-2 ①
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Level 2 Plan

### Day 1

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2 (2x)
- Qs: ALL R2:1-16 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 2

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2 (2x)
- Qs: ALL R2:17-29 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 3

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2 (2x)
- Write 10 Qs from R2
- Qs: 25 from R2 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 4

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2 (2x)
- Write 10 Qs from R2
- Qs: 25 from R1-2 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

### Day 5

- Daily devotions
- Read/listen to R2 (2x)
- Qs: 50 from R1-2 ①②
- \_\_\_\_\_

## Romans 2: Beyond Hearing

*"For it is not the hearers of the law who are righteous before God, but the doers of the law who will be justified." (v. 13) — ESV*

### Day 1: Look in the Mirror

**Reading:** Romans 2:1-4

Have you ever had a conversation like this? "She is such a gossip! I can't stand being around her. If someone is going to be my friend, they should not talk about everyone behind their backs the way she does." Or maybe you've had a conversation like this: "He is such a cheater. He was totally copying off of my test today! And after I took all that time to hide the answers in my phone, he just gets a free ride. What a cheater."

In both instances, the person doing the accusing is guilty of the same offense. One was gossiping about another's gossip. One was cheating while complaining of a cheater. Both needed a good long look in the mirror. But today's reading tells us that we all pass judgment on ourselves the second we judge another, because we're all guilty.

But there is good news! God's kindness leads us to repentance. And in repentance we find forgiveness. What a wonderful God we serve. He rightfully judges us, yet he is willing to forgive if we are willing to confess.

**Reflect** Often, when we judge others, we are guilty of the very same thing. Do we judge others in order to feel better about ourselves?

**Journal** Think of one person you have been judging harshly. Write down two ways you can change your attitude toward that person—be specific. How can you change criticism to encouragement?

**Grow** Fasting is the act of giving up something temporarily, in order to better hear God's Spirit. Try "fasting" criticism and judgment of others for a day. You might be amazed how many critical thoughts come into your mind without even realizing it. If you find yourself judging others, take a moment to pray and ask God to change your heart.

**Pray** *"Lord, create in me a right spirit, and replace criticism and judgment with support and encouragement. And help me to keep my focus on you so that I will not judge others. Amen."*

### Day 2: Who is God's Favorite?

**Reading:** Romans 2:5-11

There are so many categories and choices in life. While some of them just differentiate preferences, others of them truly define us. Nazarene, Baptist, or Jew? Mountains or beaches? White or black? Guy or girl? Tall or short? Blond or brunette? There are all kinds of things that make us different from each other. Some differences are of our own choosing, while others are not. Unfortunately, these differences often cause us to separate ourselves into groups or cliques, judging others because they are "not the same."

Man looks on the outward appearance, but God sees the heart. God does not show favoritism. The only difference that God cares about is the difference in our hearts. He looks inside us to see our true self and whether we have a heart for him—whether we have accepted his Son as Lord of our life. There are so many ways that we are different. In the body of Christ, maybe we should focus on the One who brings us together in unity. We are one united body in Christ Jesus. Amen!

**Reflect** What does it mean that man looks on the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart? Reread verse 9. Clearly, God does not show favoritism when it comes to sin. Why is it important not to keep on sinning?

**Journal** Are you part of a clique (special, exclusive group of friends) at church? Do you exclude others who are not just like you? Can you think of someone who does not "fit in"? Write down a plan of action to reach out to this person and make them feel loved and accepted.

**Grow** Reread verse 10. What kind of glory and honor are yours when you make choices that honor God?

**Pray** *"Father, I want to be a uniter, not a divider. Help me to see others through your eyes—eyes of love and compassion. Please help me to reach out in love, just as you reached out to me. Amen."*

### Day 3: The Heart: A Vital Organ

**Reading:** Romans 2:12-16

Sunday after Sunday, Craig listened to the sermons. He would quote right along as the pastor read the Scripture. He was very knowledgeable about the Word; but during the week, Craig lived a very different life. He went to parties, got drunk, and was having sex with his girlfriend. He was a walking contradiction. Though he knew God's Word, it was only "head" knowledge, not "heart" knowledge. That is until one day, when he asked Christ to become his Lord and Savior, and then everything changed.

Craig became a new person. He stopped doing the things that displeased God and began “doing” the Word. The Word became a part of him, and he took his understanding of God’s Word and began to share the gospel with his friends. This is what happens when knowing God becomes more than just an academic exercise and he becomes real—a part of our living and breathing.

- Reflect** Reread verse 13. The ones who go beyond hearing the law to obeying the law are the ones who are righteous in God’s sight. How are we to obey the law?
- Journal** Is God’s Word a part of who you are? Is your knowledge of the living God something that your heart knows without a shadow of doubt to be truth, or is it just head knowledge? Journal your thoughts about the way you have been living. Be specific about the areas that have not been totally committed to him.
- Grow** Have you been living a double life in that you are one person on Sunday and someone else the rest of the week? How can you be a more authentic Christian?
- Pray** *“Lord, teach me your ways and help me to obey your commands. I desire to go beyond simply hearing your Word. I want to live it out! Amen.”*

## Day 4: It’s All in the Ingredients

**Reading:** Romans 2:17-24

Most of us probably enjoy indulging in a little junk food from time to time. Everything in moderation, right? But have you ever looked at the ingredient label on your favorite snack food? Try Honey Buns™ – you would expect honey to be high on the list of ingredients, right? Hmm... 2%. What about your Extra Buttery Popcorn? Surely there’s lots of butter in that, right? How about no butter at all? Even your favorite grape juice may be only 4% grape juice, and 96% other stuff.

Sometimes that’s the way it is with Christians. We have the right packaging, but we are missing the quality ingredients. We’re 4% Christ, 96% other stuff. It’s time to go all natural! Let’s stop filling our lives with “filler” and fill it with the pure ingredients of a life lived for Christ.

- Reflect** As a believer, you are a walking advertisement for Christ. Are you living up to that responsibility? What would others think you are advertising with your life?
- Journal** Are you projecting authenticity to the best of your abilities? What are the main ingredients in your spiritual life? If your friends could read the basic ingredients of your life, how would they read? 100% “the real deal”? Or maybe your ingredient list reads: 40% gossip, 20% deceit, 30% truth, 10% love. Journal your thoughts.
- Grow** Ask yourself this: “Is my walk with Christ authentic? Are the ingredients of my spiritual life 100% pure?” If you answer “no” to either question, talk to God about your concerns and ask him to change your heart to be more like him.
- Pray** *“Lord, search my heart and point out to me anything that is not a pure ingredient of faith. I want to be an authentic Christian, pure through and through. Amen.”*

## Day 5: Circumcision of the Heart

**Reading:** Romans 2:25-29

Christy cried tears of sadness and guilt as she confessed her sin to her best friend. She’d had sex with a boyfriend and her heart was left unclean because of the guilt she had carried. That guilt made it easy for her to fall again and again—she had already messed up once, so why not again?

But the good news Christy learned is that God accepts us just as we are, mess and all. The moment we confess, he forgives. He can create in us a pure heart. He can completely remove the guilt and shame, and give us a new start. Christy will marry one day, and while she can never completely reclaim her innocence, she will be able to say her vows and mean them. The old has gone, the new has come. Let God circumcise your heart today.

- Reflect** What areas of your life do you need the Lord to cut away (to circumcise)? Ask him to cut away anything that hinders you from standing clean before him.
- Journal** What sin in your life have you continued to give in to because you have convinced yourself that you can never be cleansed? Journal your thoughts.
- Grow** No one is beyond the love of God. Nothing you have done is ever so bad that God can’t cleanse you and give you a new start. Make that new start right now!
- Pray** *“Purify my heart today, Lord. Cleanse me, I pray. Cut away the old selfish desires of my heart that continually hold me captive and prevent me from living a victorious spiritual life. Amen.”*

### Level 3 Plan

- Day 1**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/listen to R2 (2x)
  - Read w/ reps R2:1-11
  - Qs: ALL R2:1-11 123
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- Day 2**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/listen to R2 (2x)
  - Read w/ reps R2:12-24
  - Qs: ALL R2:12-24 123
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- Day 3**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/listen to R2 (2x)
  - Read w/ reps R2:25-29
  - Qs: ALL R2:25-29 123
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- Day 4**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/listen to R2 (2x)
  - Write 10 Qs from R2
  - Qs: 50 from R1-2 123
  - \_\_\_\_\_

- Day 5**
- Daily devotions
  - Read/listen to R2 (2x)
  - Qs: 75 from R1-2 123
  - \_\_\_\_\_