

More than a Summer

# SURVIVOR

Time with God | Fellowship | Self Discipline

**Let's face it.** Summers can pose a major challenge to our faith and obedience to Christ. It can be a very spiritually isolating time because you are away from the environment and friends that have helped you grow spiritually this past school year. It can be a dangerous time to your faith and your future.

But it also can be a great opportunity to see your faith tested and increase and an opportunity to make some key steps on your own. You can make some decisions now that will put you in a position of advantage and strength as you go into the summer. As a Christian, we can embrace challenges because we recognize the opportunity to trust God in new ways and see our faith grow in ways that we would have never seen otherwise.

Now is the time to act. How can you prepare to meet the spiritual challenges that the summer will bring? Three key essential elements will help you be “more than a summer survivor”.

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## ESSENTIAL #1

### Daily Time with God and His Word

The number one priority in your summer, as in all of your life, must be fellowship with God. Seek to know Him, love Him and serve Him. We do that primarily through submitting our hearts to Him and “listening” to His Word. We cannot know God intimately without knowing the Word of God. His Word is the Spirit's food that nourishes our soul. Our faith and the work of his Holy Spirit depend upon a constant diet spending time in the Bible.

## *How to Do This*

Set aside, as a daily priority, at least 30 minutes, but better yet, 45 minutes to an hour to spend time alone with God in praise, prayer and the reading of and “listening to His Word.

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### ESSENTIAL #2

#### **The Right Fellowship**

How much do you think you imitate your friends? Maybe not consciously, but it’s incredible how much we pick up and emulate the attitudes, values

and behaviors of those we spend our time with. We also influence those around us in the same way. The influence of our friends and companions can be destructive if it’s the wrong influence. Spending too much time with the wrong people this summer can have a disastrous consequences to your faith and even the rest of your life.

It is not a coincidence that often the major periods of spiritual growth in our lives are also times of rich Christian fellowship. In Acts 2:42 we read, They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship” and in verse 46, “Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts”. Fellowship, like with the early Christians, is something you have to be devoted to as a priority in your life. One of your major priorities this summer needs to be a way to be around other committed Christians, spending quality and quantity time with them.

## *How To Do This*

1. Get involved in a good church at home. Look for a church that teaches a high view of Christ, His work on the cross and His resurrection, and a high view of the authority of Scripture. Also look for a community that demonstrates love for one another and for the lost. Then talk to the pastor or youth pastor and ask how you could best get involved with the church over the summer. Get fed spiritually but also give of yourself.

2. Keep in touch with your friends from Cru over the summer. E-mail can be a great help in doing this. Also get together with others that may live around you for times of prayer, Bible study or just having fun and fellowship together. You could plan a weekend to get together to go camping with those who live in neighboring towns or would be willing to take a road trip. You may know some other committed Christian friends where you will be. Make it a priority to spend time together with them.
3. If you don't have any committed Christian friends around you where you will be going, you can still fellowship with some mature and influential Christians. You can fellowship with Christians through reading their books or listening to their tapes. Included in this packet is a suggested reading list. Make it a priority to spend regular time reading. It could have a tremendous impact on your life and faith.

### **Don't Go Through the Summer Alone**

God created you to need people in your life and people will influence you one way or another. Satan wants you isolated from the influence, camaraderie and companionship of other committed Christians this summer. You have not been given the task of being the Lone Ranger Christian. You need others in your life to keep you spiritually sharp.

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## **ESSENTIAL #3**

### **Self-Discipline**

Discipline plays a key role to the extent that God can consistently work in your life. We will never rise from a life of sporadic spiritual growth that is dependent upon certain events or circumstances to a steady spiritual maturity until we learn how to order our lives around our most valued convictions.

Discipline is the ability to order one's own life to live according to what one has determined to accomplish or achieve. What would you like to see God do in your life this summer? To be a faithful disciple on a steady basis requires that we develop personal discipline. It means that we make choices about what is important and what we are going to invest our time in.

God has already given you His Spirit, a Spirit of self-control and discipline (2 Timothy 1:7). Ask God to develop within you the fruits of self-discipline this summer.

## *How To Do This*

Practically, what this means is that you make choices now as to what you are going to commit yourself to this summer. It means saying “yes” to habits and activities that will help you to grow spiritually and saying “no” to the habits and activities that could potentially drag you down.

1. The first step to becoming disciplined is to determine your own common pitfalls and obstacles that will keep you from reaching your desired end and goal (Hebrews 12:1). Are you involved in a good church back home or do you know of one? What temptations will you face in your environment? What is your current relationship like with your parents? Other obstacles could be laziness, working a lot of hours (not a bad thing but something you need to plan for).
2. Make a list of priorities of things you want to accomplish on a daily and weekly basis. Priorities are always based upon what we value above other values – what we value most. How we spend our resources (time, money relationships, etc.) reveal where our priorities are. Self-discipline must draw upon your own convictions of what has the most value in your life. We have included a resource called “Priorities and SummerCovenant” to help you do this.
3. Develop a schedule and stick to it. Make sure you are putting in your priorities first. Otherwise they can get squeezed out by a lot of filler. For most of us, we don’t plan to fail but we fail to plan.

## **Final Encouragement**

God has given you both the resources and responsibility to pursue and plan for your own spiritual growth this summer and effectively resist temptation. His grace is sufficient and He gives you the adequate resources to meet each day’s challenge as you depend on Him and walk in the power of the Holy Spirit.

## MEETING WITH GOD

A great way to enjoy time with God is to write about what you're learning when you meet with Him. A journal is a wonderful tool for recording thoughts and emotions during your daily times with God. Keeping a journal has several benefits.

It helps get your thoughts on paper, it's a place to write and share your feelings with the Lord and record prayer requests and answers. Also, your journal is a useful place to write down your observations as you study God's Word.

You'll have special times with the Lord when you look back at the past months and years and worship Him for His faithfulness, provision and the personal growth you've seen. When you write in your journal don't hesitate to include whatever's on your mind that you'd like to talk to the Lord about.

When you record your observations from personal Bible study, use the following suggestions to help you get started.

[10 minutes]      **Record:** your thoughts, feelings, prayers for your time with the Lord.

[20 minutes]      **Read:** Study the passage for the day. Read a book passage by passage or focus on a topic to study or use the suggested schedule below.

1. Write out the main thought of the passage.
2. Write what you learned.
3. Ask how this Scripture specifically applies to your life?

[5 minutes]      **Deed:** Let Christ lead you to plan one totally unselfish and loving act of kindness for the day. Pray that He will act through you to fulfill this plan in a vigorous and compassionate manner.

[5 minutes]      **Need:** Decide what your greatest single need is for the day. Ask the Lord for clear insight about your life. Trust Him for great things.

**Pray:** Spend time in prayer. The ACTS strategy for prayer is a good model to begin with.

**Adoration:** Spend time praising the Lord by praying the Psalms back to Him (Psalm 28:7 & 100:4). Sing hymns, listening to a praise tape or praise Him for His attributes.

**C**onfession: Ask God to search your heart (Psalm 139:23,24). Confess any sins the Holy Spirit reveals to you (Psalm. 66:18, I John 1:9). Make certain that you're filled with the Spirit (Ephesians 5:15-20).

**T**hanksgiving: Thank God for all that He's done and is doing in your life and the lives of others. Write a list of what you're thankful for.

**S**upplication: Pray for specific things each day such as personal concerns, family, upcoming events, friends, missionaries, etc. Write down your requests so you'll have a record of God's guidance and faithfulness.

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### **Getting started:**

#### Option #1 – Growing Closer to God in 31 Days

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|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Isaiah 55:6-11          | 11. Philippians 3:7-14     | 21. I John 4:7-13         |
| 2. Psalm 63:1-8            | 12. Psalm 34:1-10          | 22. I Thessalonians 4:1-8 |
| 3. Matthew 7:21-27         | 13. James 1:2-8            | 23. Psalm 119:1-11        |
| 4. Isaiah 40:28-31         | 14. II Corinthians 5:14-17 | 24. Ephesians 6:13-20     |
| 5. Psalm 1:1-6             | 15. Romans 8:31-39         | 25. Luke 11:5-10          |
| 6. Joshua 1:6-9            | 16. II Peter 1:4-8         | 26. Philippians 4:6-9     |
| 7. Mark 2:1-12             | 17. Colossians 1:9-14      | 27. Matthew 13:53-58      |
| 8. Luke 7:36-50            | 18. Philippians 2:1-11     | 28. Luke 7:2-10           |
| 9. John 15:1-8             | 19. Romans 12:1-5          | 29. II Timothy 2:1-7      |
| 10. II Corinthians 5:14-17 | 20. Ephesians 4:11-16      | 30. John 15:13-21         |

## Option #2 - New Testament Summer Reading Plan

Goal: Read through all of the New Testament during the summer.

Motivation: Gain an overall grasp of the New Testament.

### **May**

John

### **June**

Matthew

Romans 9

I Corinthians

Philippians

I Thessalonians

I Peter

I John

Jude

### **July**

Mark

Luke

II Corinthians

Galatians

Ephesians

II Thessalonians

I Timothy

Titus

II Peter

### **August**

Acts

Colossians

II Timothy

Philemon

Hebrews

James

II John

III John

Revelation

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## **Things to Pray for Your Campus**

### *Incoming Freshman*

- That Christians would want to take a stand for Christ (Matthew 9:37-38). Pray that they would avoid involvement with bad elements of campus. I Corinthians 5 & 6; Revelation 21:8; John 17:15; 2 Corinthians 11:2, 3
- Pray for non-Christians, that God would prepare the soil of their hearts would be hungry to hear the gospel and ready to respond in faith. Matthew 13 and 2 Corinthians 4:6: *For God, who said, "Let light shine out of the darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.*

## *Your Transformational Community*

- That we'd be people who know the Lord. Ephesians 1:18-19: *I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.*
- That we would consider life as Christ, that we would present ourselves to Him, that we would seek His kingdom first. Philippians 1:21: *For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Romans 12:1,2; Matthew 6:33.
- That we would let the Spirit of God control and empower us. Ephesians 3:14-19: *That God would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man; so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.*
- That we would be people who delight in God's word. Psalm 1:2: *But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in His law he meditates day and night.*
- That there would be a supernatural unity among us so that the campus may believe. John 17:20-21: *I do not ask in behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us; that the world may believe that Thou didst send Me.*
- That we would grow spiritually this summer. That they would step out in faith. Hebrews 12:1-3; Colossians 3:16; Romans 4:3; Hebrews 11:8