

Learning

to Recognize

Journal

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You are a beloved child of **GOD**. **GOD** loves you for who you are, not for what you do. Think about that as you create a picture of what you look like to **GOD**. Where is the light of **GOD** in you? Is there one part of you that is more aware of **GOD'S** light?



As you look at this picture of you as God sees you, what are you thinking? What do you notice?

Alone is not always lonely. Jesus was constantly surrounded by people who wanted him to **PREACH, TEACH, HEAL, AND CHANGE** their lives, so he often went away to be alone with God. How many hours a day do you spend with others? How many hours alone? Have there been times when you wished you could go somewhere by yourself?



Record the number of hours you spend with others and the number you spend by yourself.

Finish the following sentences:

I like to be alone when... _____

The hardest thing about being alone is... _____



Look at your **HANDS**. What do you do with your **HANDS** each day? Place one of your **HANDS** on your journal page and trace around it. Ask God to help you think of a person your touch could help. In the middle of your **HAND** outline, write their name and how you will use your helping **HANDS** for that person.

What happens as you use your helping hands.
How does it make you feel?
How does the person you help feel?

Choose a small object that draws your mind to God. It could be anything: a rock, a picture, a note. Place it somewhere you pass by every day. Every time you go by it, really slow down and notice it. Take just a moment to think about who the symbol reminds you of—God who **LOVES** you and whom you **LOVE**.



Why does your object remind you of God?

Keep track in your journal of how many times each day you really noticed your object and thought about God.

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Take a **WALK** in a quiet, natural setting—a park or a quiet street. If a particular plant, insect, cloud, stone, or puddle draws your attention, stop and spend time with it. **TOUCH**, **SMELL**, **LOOK**, and **LISTEN**. See if it has something to **TEACH** you.

Draw a picture of the part of nature you spent time with.

What did it teach you about God?

Repeating or writing a small verse of scripture can help focus your mind on God. Use the familiar and powerful scripture Psalm 45:10 NRSV: "BE still and know that I am God." In your journal, write each of the following phrases slowly and prayerfully: "BE still and know that I am God...BE still and know that I am...BE still and know...BE still...BE..."



Now write the scripture in reverse order: "BE...BE still...BE still and know...BE still and know that I am...BE still and know that I am God. Amen."

How might using this focus practice be helpful in your life?



This is MY story; this is MY song, praising MY Savior all the day long.—Blessed Assurance

Begin to write down your story this week by finishing the phrase, "A time in my life when I felt close to God was..."

Think about one person you would like to share this story with.
Find a time to sit together and share.
How did it feel?

Carefully look back at days 8 through 13 in your journal. Think about the past week. Are you able to recognize **GOD** in you? Were there times you reflected the love of **GOD** in the world?



Which day was most helpful to you? Which day was the most difficult? Why?



Find a map or a globe of the world. Look at all the nations and find a country other than your own where you know someone or where there is a **COMMUNITY OF CHRIST CONGREGATION**. How far are they from your homeland? Pray for this person or **CONGREGATION**. Feel the way God connects us in the same way the oceans connect the continents.

Use a piece of string or yarn to measure, on your globe or map, the distance between the two countries. Glue it in your journal. Label one end with your name and homeland and the other end with the name and homeland of the person or congregation for whom you are praying.

Bring a piece of **BREAD** to your prayer place. Think about all the people and steps it took to make this **BREAD**. Tear the **BREAD** into several small pieces. As you slowly chew each piece, pay attention to its taste, smell, and feel. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving and blessing for those who created this **BREAD**. Ask God to help you find ways to help those who are hungry.



Make a list of ways you can be brave and help people in the world who are hungry. Which one could you do right now?

- | | |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____ | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____ | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____ | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |



In your journal list the names of world church **LEADERS**, your mission center **LEADERS**, and your congregation **LEADERS**. If possible, find a picture of each one. Pray for them. Ask God to help them be good leaders.

What do you think would be the hardest part of being a church leader? What would be the best part?

A series of horizontal lines provided for writing a journal entry.

"FORGIVE US FOR DOING WRONG AS WE FORGIVE OTHERS" (MATTHEW 6:12). Do you think it is harder to forgive or to ask for forgiveness? In your journal, list the kinds of things that require forgiveness. Is there something on that list that you have done to someone else? Cut out a paper heart that you have done to someone else? On it, open your heart to God as you write a prayer asking for forgiveness. Tape or glue your heart prayer onto your journal page.



1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Are you ready to ask forgiveness from the person you hurt?
 If yes, practice what you want to say by writing it in your journal.

COMMUNITY OF CHRIST is called to create communities of joy, hope, love, and peace. What do those words look like in a COMMUNITY? Think of COMMUNITIES you are part of: church, school, home, sports teams, musical groups... Remember and celebrate a time one of your COMMUNITIES created joy. A time one created hope. Created love. Created peace. Offer a prayer of thanksgiving that you are part of these COMMUNITIES.



Draw a picture showing these communities creating joy, hope, love, and peace.

JOY

HOPE

LOVE

PEACE

What do these communities have in common?

Begin with a quiet prayer asking **GOD** to help you become aware of someone who is feeling hurt or left out. Write their name on a piece of paper. Using a flashlight, glow stick, or small lamp, shine its light on that person's name. Imagine the glow of the light as **GOD'S** love surrounding them. Ask **GOD** to bless them in whatever way is needed. Keep that person in your heart and prayers today.



What words could you say that might help this person feel better?
Write them in your journal.

Now, what could you do with these words?



This practice is a prayer of blessing for your **BODY** as you open it to feel God's presence. Place your **HANDS** over your **EYES**. Ask God to help you lovingly see the world. Put your **HANDS** on your **HEAD**. Ask for your **MIND** to stay focused. Place your **HANDS** over your **EARS**. Pray that you may pay attention to the sounds around you. Put your **HANDS** on your **THROAT** and ask God to guide your words. Put your **HANDS** over your **HEART**. Ask to receive and share God's love and peace. Close with an "Amen."

Create a cartoon drawing showing you offering the five body prayer: your eyes, your head, your ears, your throat, and your heart. Use this cartoon as a reminder of how to offer a body prayer.

YOUR EYES

YOUR HEAD

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YOUR EARS

YOUR THROAT

YOUR HEART

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