

HIDDEN TREASURE QUEST

**KNOWING
GOD
THROUGH
CREATION**

Hide and Seek Ministries

The logo for Hide and Seek Ministries (HSM) features the letters 'HSM' in a bold, black, serif font. The letter 'H' is stylized with a small white trapezoidal shape at the top, resembling a flashlight beam or a searchlight.

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HIDDEN TREASURE QUEST

Proverbs 2:1-11

My son, accept my words.
Store up my commands inside you.
Let your ears listen to wisdom.
Apply your heart to understanding.
Call out for the ability to be wise.
Cry out for understanding.
Look for it as you would look for silver.
**Search for it as you would search
for hidden treasure.**
Then you will understand how to have
respect for the LORD.
You will find out how to know God.
The LORD gives wisdom.
Knowledge and understanding come from his mouth.
He stores up success for honest people.
He is like a shield to those who live without blame.
He guards the path of those who are honest.
He watches over the way of his faithful ones.
You will understand what is right and honest and fair.
You will understand the right way to live.
Your heart will become wise.
Your mind will delight in knowledge.
Good sense will keep you safe.
Understanding will guard you.

(NIRV, emphasis added)

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PARENTS, CAREGIVERS, AND LEADERS

Who is Hidden Treasure Quest for?

Hidden Treasure Quest is a Christian discipleship series written for ages nine to fourteen. These flexible books can be read independently, as a family, during homeschool, or in a small-group study with multiple ages.

Why Hidden Treasure Quest?

Due to cultural influences and a lack of discipleship, a countless number of youth and young adults are abandoning their faith. *Hidden Treasure Quest* guides young readers to develop their **own** relationship with the Lord. God's plan for all people is much more than saying a prayer to get to heaven. Every follower of Christ is called to be a disciple and to make disciples. The *Hidden Treasure Quest* series helps readers learn how to apply God's Word to their lives and learn how to follow and live for Jesus.

How should Hidden Treasure Quest be read?

The series of books are best read in order. With the suggested bible reading plan, memory verses, and scripture references, it is encouraged that the reader have access to a Bible in a version that the reader can understand. A master list of memory verses and the bible reading plan for each chapter can be found near the back of this book. The master lists also contain *additional* bible verses for those who are interested in further bible study. A printable version of these lists is available at www.hideandseekministries.com. Although not required, the *Hidden*

Treasure Quest Study Guide can also be utilized to facilitate an even deeper understanding and help readers learn how to study the Word of God more efficiently and effectively.

A Note About the Science Chapters

The science chapters found near the end of the book (chapters 15-17) are a great way to help readers understand the similarities and differences when comparing textbook science and the Bible. The chapters will also help students discover biblical answers to questions that result from a science-related class that teaches about evolution and/or the big bang theory.

The information provided has intentionally been presented in an easy-to-understand way. However, if the reader is too young to understand the concepts found in the first two science chapters, *Hidden Treasure Quest* can easily be read and understood by skipping chapters 15 and 16. You will find this book to still be very beneficial if the reader needs to save those two chapters for when they are ready for them.

The Hide and Seek Ministries' (HSM) Website

The HSM website provides additional resources for Christian discipleship including fun facts, bible quizzes, answers to bible questions, and free printable worksheets. To find out more, visit www.hideandseekministries.com.

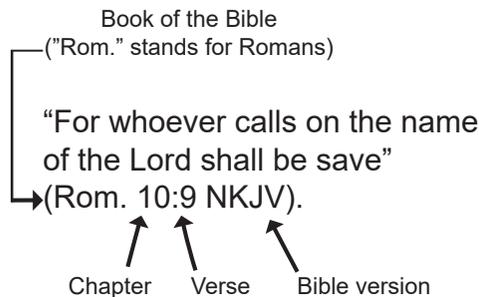
TIPS FOR THE READER

Bible Reading Plan and Memory Verses

At the beginning of every chapter in this book, you will find bible verses to memorize and other verses to read in your Bible. These reading and memory verses are encouraged but not required to understand each chapter. There are two lists near the back of this book (pages 119-128) that have all the bible verses for every chapter. These lists also have *additional* bible verses for those who are interested in further bible study.

Bible References

The information in this book comes from the Bible. You will often see a bible book name, chapter, and verse(s) number in parenthesis at the end of a sentence. This shows where you can find the information in your own Bible. The book name will be abbreviated. Here is an example:



You will only see the Bible version (like NKJV or NIrV) when the sentence is exactly how it appears in the Bible (meaning this book is quoting the Bible word-for-word). If you don't see the version, then the sentence has summarized what the bible

verse says. You may find a list of abbreviations for the books at the beginning of most Bibles.

Daily Reading

For many reasons, we should fill our heart with God's Word. Each of us should spend time reading the Bible every day. If you struggle doing this, there are many great bible reading plans available to help you stay on track. Reading plans give you a list of verses you should read each day. Some help you read the Bible in one year or less. Others will take you through part of the Bible in a year. Pick one that works for you and stick with it. You should continue to follow a plan even after you have finished *Hidden Treasure Quest*. Most bibles have a reading plan included in them. You can also find free plans on the internet (with the assistance of your parents). See Appendix A for more tips to understand the Bible.

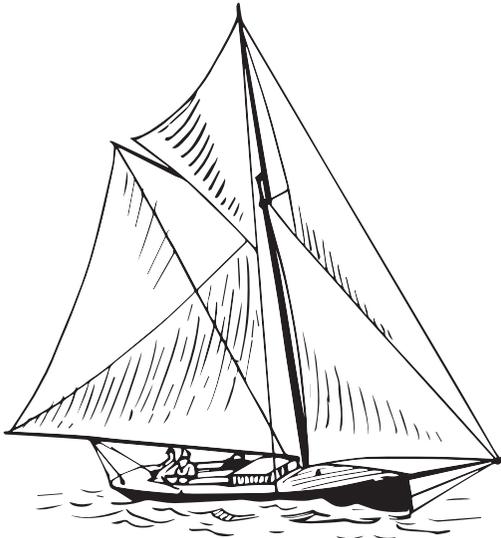
Make a Journal

As you read the Bible each day, try making a journal. Copy down a bible verse in your notebook that stands out to you. Then write notes about that verse such as what the verse means, and how you can do what it says. Copying verses from the Bible on another piece of paper is always a great idea. It will cause you to read the verse more slowly and think about what it says. In addition to taking notes, you can also make a list of verses that you want to memorize. You can record a list in your journal to practice every day. The memory verses in this book are a great starting point.

INTRODUCTION: A NOTE FROM BEN

My name is Benjamin, but everyone calls me Ben. On the outside, I may appear to be an average thirteen-year-old boy who loves swimming, reading, and exploring with my dog. But on the inside, I'm not average at all. In fact, I'm much different than most people in the world. Before I tell you more about me, I want to tell you about my friend named Nate.

Nate's favorite thing to do as a kid was to go sailing with his grandfather. Every Saturday morning, Nate loved the smell of salt water and feeling the wind on his face as they sailed for hours on a warm summer day. In Nate's eyes, nothing was better than gliding on a massive white boat and learning from the world's best sailor. He enjoyed it so much that Nate decided he wanted to have a sailboat of his own. At an early age, Nate began to save every penny he could. By the time he was an adult, he had finally saved enough money to buy his very own boat.



Nate was so excited the day he brought it home. It was white with dark blue stripes on the side that seemed to sparkle in the sun. It was the most beautiful sailboat he had ever seen. The following Saturday, Nate prepared for his first sailing adventure by himself. With his grandfather in mind, he worked all morning inspecting above and below deck to ensure his boat was ready for the ocean water. With everything in place, he finally began to untie the rope to set sail. Suddenly, Nate realized something that made him panic. He did not know how to sail his boat by himself. He had always enjoyed sailing but had never taken the time to learn more than just the basics of how to sail. Nate had relied on his grandfather to do most of the work.

Like Nate, some of us have not taken the time (or maybe have not had the chance) to learn more than just the basics of believing in God. Nate had been around sailing all his life. He had learned several things about it from watching his grandfather. However, when he grew older and didn't have his grandfather helping him, he wasn't prepared to do it by himself.

Maybe you have learned a few things about God or even several things. Maybe you have learned many bible stories about Adam and Eve, Noah's ark, David and Goliath, or Samson. But do you really know God in a way that you are prepared to live your whole life following Jesus? We don't want to make the same mistake Nate did and be unprepared.

I believe that God is real, the Bible is true, and Jesus died to save my life from sin. This is what makes me so different

than many other people in the world. I have been made a child of God, but I have found that many people do not believe the same way. Some people have made fun of me for believing in God. Others have tried to tell me that God is not real. Some think there is a God but say He is different than what the Bible describes. Many people even think we came from apes and the earth was made from a big explosion!

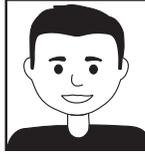
Some of my friends ask me questions about my faith in God, and I don't always have the answer. I don't like it when I don't know what to tell them. This is why I am here today. I want to introduce you to *Hidden Treasure Quest*. *Hidden Treasure Quest* was designed to help young people learn about God with their heart, not just their mind.

In the Bible, Proverbs 2 talks about searching for wisdom, knowledge and understanding like we would a hidden treasure. These things can only come from God. Wisdom, knowledge, and understanding can help us make the right choices and know God in a close, personal way. As you start searching for the things of God like you would a hidden treasure, you will see that God is actually easy to find. He is waiting for you to look for Him, and He's even excited about it! The *Hidden Treasure Quest* series is designed to help you become prepared to live your life following Jesus.

There will never be a time when we know everything there is to know about God. However, there are so many things we can know right now. In this first book, we will be learning the ways of God by looking at what He has created and learning how and why He created it. I will be making comments along

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the way to help you understand some things. You will know it's me when you see my picture:

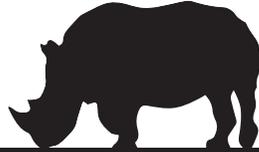


You will see my comment below my picture like this.

Oh, I almost forgot. This is my dog, Checkers. You will see him from time to time. He follows me everywhere I go.



READ:
Genesis 1
Genesis 2



WHY DID GOD CREATE PEOPLE?

Memory Verse:

So God created man in His own image.
Genesis 1:27 (NKJV)



I'm going to ask you to think about two different people.

Person number one: Think of a person you know a lot about. Maybe it's your mom, dad, brother, sister, or someone else who lives with you. Imagine that person in your mind. What is something this person enjoys doing? What is their favorite food or favorite color? Do you know how they act when they are happy? Do you know something that makes them excited or mad? Do you know if they like animals, like the outdoors, or like any sports?

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Person number two: Now think about a person that doesn't live with you. You know their name, but you don't spend much time with them. Maybe it's a neighbor, a person at church, or school. Imagine that person in your mind. Try to answer the same questions for this person.



Why is it easier to answer questions for the person you live with and see every day? It is easier because you have a *relationship* with that person. Having a relationship with someone means you know a lot about them. You know that person in a close, personal way. It's more than just knowing their name and a few facts about them. A relationship connects you with another person. You have a lot better relationship with your parents (or the people you live with) than a neighbor that lives down the road. The more time you spend with someone, the better relationship you will have with them. Your relationship is so strong with your parents (or other relatives) that you not only know a lot about them, but you love them.

Did you know we can have a relationship with God? God is the Creator of the universe and all living things. God's most special creation of all is people. Out of all the great wonders in the world, people are His greatest treasure! Having a relationship with God is the reason He made us. He did not make us because He was lonely or needed people to help Him. He made us out of love and wants to have a relationship with each one of us.

As God was preparing to make Adam, the first man, He said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness..."

(Gen. 1:26 NIV). Creating us in His *image* means God made us to be like Him. This does not mean that He was making another god, and it doesn't mean that we look exactly like Him. But on the outside, in many ways, we look like God. We don't look like sharks or rhinos or spiders. Although God is a spirit and does not have lungs to breathe, He created us to look like Him.

We are also made in His *likeness*. This means we have certain qualities and abilities that other creation does not have. Have you ever seen a dog eat something? Maybe you have accidentally dropped a piece of food on the floor and your dog snatched it and ate it. Dogs don't take time to enjoy their food. They usually swallow the whole thing in one gulp. Can you imagine if we all ate and drank like dogs? Picture your whole family sitting at the dinner table with their face in a bowl of food gulping it down. Then, when you were thirsty, you started lapping up water with your tongue.

People are God's only created beings who were made in His likeness and image. God made us *unique*, and He did it for a reason. God made us to be like Him so we have the ability to have a relationship with Him. Unlike animals, people can talk, think, reason, and make choices. God wants us to choose to spend time with Him and get to know who He is. He loves us and wants us to love Him. He wants us to be able to enjoy knowing Him, and He wants to spend eternity (forever) with us in heaven.

Your relationship with God is the most important relationship you will ever have. The first step to having a

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relationship with God is believing in His Son, Jesus Christ. Jesus said, “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me” (John 14:6 NIV). Only those who choose to believe in Jesus can have a relationship with God.

In order to know God, you also must spend time with Him. Like any relationship, the more time you spend with Him the better you will know Him. Even though we can't see Him with our eyes, God is always with us. We can spend time with Him by talking to Him (praying) and reading His Word (the Bible).

Let's say you were in the same room all day with your best friend. You sat right next to him all day, but you never said a word to each other. You didn't even look at each other. That is what we are doing to God if we don't speak to Him all day. God is always with us and waiting to hear from us. He wants to talk with you because He loves you.

It's important that we don't just know facts about God, but we know Him in a close, personal way. But is this even possible? Can we learn about someone we can't see with our eyes? The Bible says, *Yes!* *Hidden Treasure Quest* is a series of discipleship books to help you know God through creation, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

What is *discipleship*? A disciple of Christ is not just referring to the twelve people that followed Jesus while He was on earth. *You* can also be a disciple. In fact, some of Jesus' last words before He went to heaven told each person to go into all the world and make disciples (Matt. 28:19). Jesus tells us to *be*

a disciple and to *make* disciples.

Believing in Jesus does not automatically make you a disciple. Being a disciple of Christ means God is most important in your life. You have a desire to seek and follow Jesus with all your heart, even if it means you are different than most other people in the world. As a disciple, you make a choice to live **for** Jesus. You also desire to find and follow *His* plan for your life. *Hidden Treasure Quest* is designed to help you become a disciple of Jesus Christ. Discipleship is an exciting and rewarding journey!

