

HIDDEN TREASURE QUEST

**KNOWING GOD
THROUGH JESUS**

Hide and Seek Ministries



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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. These books are also great for a church group on Wednesday or Sunday nights.

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. Many believers accept Christ into their life but receive little guidance on how to become His disciple. *Hidden Treasure Quest* is an easy-to-understand book series that assists readers in developing their own personal relationship with God as they learn to follow and live for Jesus Christ.

How should Hidden Treasure Quest be read?

Although not required, we recommend reading the book series 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 helps the reader personally apply God's Word to their life.

The Hide and Seek Ministries' (HSM) Website

The HSM website provides additional resources for Christian discipleship including podcasts, books, 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 127-137) 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.

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).

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

I can still remember the frustrated look on my dad's face after we had been driving for hours in his old red truck. My dad didn't see the need for the map that was tucked away in the side of his briefcase. He was convinced he knew where he was going. But after driving for three hours, I heard my dad sigh and he slowed down to a stop.

"I don't remember this fork in the road," my dad said with that frustrated look I remember so well. He pulled off to the side of the road and stared out the window at what lay ahead. I watched several cars drive by us. Most of the cars continued to drive down the bigger of the two roads without even hesitating. This road was much wider than the other and was by far the busiest. It looked like it could hold hundreds of cars at once.

It took several minutes before I finally saw a car drive down the second smaller road, and I wondered why there weren't many people traveling in that direction. After the cars made their choice of road, you could only see them for a few more seconds before they disappeared over the top of the hill.

"Should I get the map, Dad?" I asked as I glanced behind his seat at his black briefcase. "Maybe that smaller road doesn't lead to anything important since not very many are driving that way." But my comments didn't seem to help. He still had that look on his face, and he started tapping his fingers on the steering wheel.

After a few more minutes, he reached for his phone to

check the signal again. We had not had phone service for the past hour, and I don't think that was helping my dad's mood. He let out another sigh and started fumbling with his briefcase until he found the right pocket. My dad needed a map. In fact, we all need a map.

You will make millions of decisions during your lifetime. But the most important decision you will ever make is whether you will take the wide or narrow road. The Bible says:

“Enter through the narrow gate. The gate is wide and the road is wide that leads to hell, and many people enter through that gate. But the gate is small and the road is narrow that leads to true life. Only a few people find that road.” (Matt. 7:13-14 NCV)

There is not a literal gate to go through. The two gates are a way to describe a decision that every person in the world will make. The two gates are two choices.

The wide gate is one choice. Going through the wide gate means you choose not to believe in Jesus. It is bigger than the other gate because the Bible says many people will make this choice. But without Jesus this wide gate leads to destruction.

There is a second gate (or a second choice) that does not lead to destruction but to life. It is the choice to believe that Jesus is your Lord and Savior. This narrow gate, that not as many people choose to go through, leads to life because it leads to Jesus.

When you believe in Jesus you are saved from sin and this is a free gift. (It's not based on what you do.) By believing in Jesus, you have entered through the narrow gate. However, after making the choice to believe in Jesus, you can also choose to become a *disciple* of Jesus. This means you choose to not just enter through the narrow gate but to *follow* Him down the narrow road.

To follow Jesus down the narrow road you need a map just like Ben's dad did. Your map is the Bible. A map helps you see which way to go, and that's exactly what the Bible does. The Bible is God's way of helping you follow Jesus down the narrow road.

Notice no one forced Ben's dad to take the narrow road on that trip they took. And no one will force you to follow Jesus. It is your choice. Following Jesus, and going on the narrow road, is not always easy. And it is definitely not always popular. But as you avoid that busy, wide road, you will find how great it is to be different. And the good news is you do not have to be perfect to do this.

Jesus is the only way to life and the only way to God. God gave us the Bible (our map) so we can see which way to go, learn about Him, and have a relationship with Him through Jesus. Jesus said:

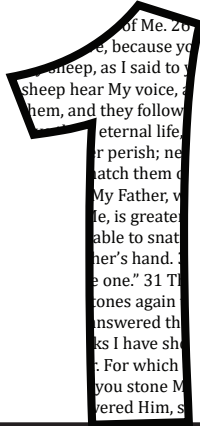
- “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9)
- “I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30)
- “If you knew me, you would know my Father also.” (John 8:19)

Jesus is the Son of God, but He is also God. When you learn about Jesus you are learning about God. And when you search through the Bible as if searching for hidden treasure, you will “find out how to know God” (Prov. 2:1-5 NIV). You can begin to know God in a close, personal way the moment you believe in Jesus and follow Him on the narrow road.

In this book, we will be talking about this narrow road as your “path”. God has a special path planned just for you, and He wants to help you follow it.



My name is Ben, and I introduced myself in the first book of *Hidden Treasure Quest*. I am really excited for you to join me on our journey through this second book as we learn how to know God through Jesus. As you start reading, I will be adding my own comments throughout the book. You will know it's me when you see my picture like the one above. And my comments will be below my picture like this one is. Let's get started!



READ:
Proverbs 2
John 10:1-30

HIS VOICE

Memory Verse:

My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. John 10:27



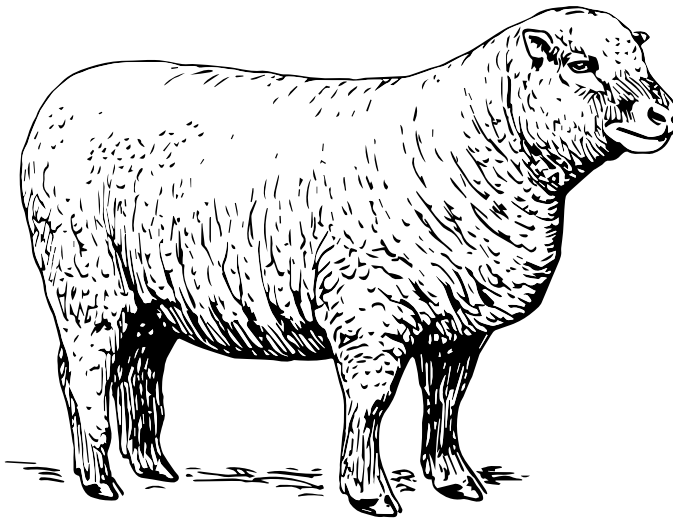
I didn't know my great grandfather for very long. He moved to America only a few years before he died. But I can still remember his gray hat and his long wooden staff. He lived most of his life in Letterkenny, Ireland. That staff always reminded him of the sheep he had on the green Irish hills, and I loved hearing stories about them. He loved his sheep and his sheep loved him.

When his sheep were thirsty, he would lead his flock to a big lake for a drink. While they were there, a second shepherd sometimes came with his own flock of sheep. The sheep from both flocks looked alike and, as they

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gathered around the water together, it was hard to tell them apart.

I once asked him, "When one shepherd left the lake, how would you know which sheep belonged to you?" My grandfather smiled and said the sheep recognized his voice. When it was time to go, he would simply call to them and only the sheep in his own flock would follow his voice.



Your Choices

All people, at some point in their lives, will make choices that are not easy. Decisions like where to go to college, what job to take, who to marry, and where to live are big, important choices. For example, what if you decided to go to college to be a dentist. But after you completed school and started working, you discovered how much you really do not like working on teeth. And you were miserable. You spent eight years in college, and then found out you made a mistake. The decisions

you make, both big and small, can completely change your life.

But what if you had a time machine? What if before you made a decision, you could travel to the future and see how that decision would turn out? For instance, you could find out what your life would be like if you went to a specific school or married a certain person. You could avoid making too many mistakes.

We don't have a time machine, but we do have choices to make every single day. Some choices are easy, but some are not so easy. Regardless, all choices are important and can be life changing.

What You Pay Attention To

Something you may not realize is the things you pay attention to affect the choices you make. Look at Adam and Eve, for example. When God created the world, He created it to be perfect. He placed Adam and Eve in a perfect garden, in a perfect world, and they ended up having to make a decision. They had a choice of listening to the voice of God or to another voice in the world. Which voice did Eve decide to pay attention to?

God told Adam and Eve not to eat from the one tree, and the serpent told Eve the opposite. Whether to eat a piece of fruit may have seemed like a small decision. But who she decided to pay attention to affected the rest of her life in a big way. (It even affected yours.)

We already know the end of the story. Eve made the wrong choice. She had no problem listening to the voice of God until

another voice came and distracted her. She started paying more attention to the other voice than she did the voice of God. What she paid attention to and the voice she listened to affected the choice she made. And it was the wrong one.

God's Voice

In the same way, God is speaking to you right now. In fact, He speaks to you every day. But there are also other voices in this world that speak to you. People like your family, friends, and teachers are some of those voices. But even things like television, music, video games, the internet, and books have something to say to you. Some of these voices are good, but some are not. Every day, you have the same choice that Eve had. Are you listening to God's voice, and can you recognize when you should not listen to a voice in this world?

Not only is it important to decide which voice to pay attention to, but which voice are you going to follow? Eve heard what both God and the serpent had to say, but she could choose to follow only one.

Jesus said, "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me" (John 10:27). If you believe in Jesus, He is your Shepherd and you are His sheep. You should listen to and follow His voice. You should be like Ben's grandfather's sheep and know which shepherd's voice you need to follow.

Have you ever asked an adult why you had to do something, and they said, "Because I said so"? With Jesus, it's not just about "because He said so". The Bible is not a list of rules to follow. More than anyone else in the world, Jesus knows what

is best for you. He knows what you like, dislike, and what will truly make you happy. He has plans for you that are far better than you could ever plan yourself. He loves you more than you can ever imagine, and He wants you to have the best possible life. He can see the past, present, and future all at the same time. (And He is far better than a time machine.) He wants to help you make every single decision in your life and help you avoid making mistakes.

As with Eve, what you decide to pay attention to affects the choices you make. It affects your attitude, your thoughts, your beliefs, and your actions. The things you are listening and paying attention to will get in your heart. And the Bible says everything you do comes from your heart (Prov. 4:23). Your heart is like a steering wheel for your life. What you pay attention to decides which road you take. And just like we read in Ben's introduction, you have the option of a wide road or a narrow road.

God is never going to force you to follow Him. He didn't force Adam and Eve, and He's not going to force you. God really wants to help you with everything you do in your life, but it's your choice.

As your Shepherd, God is talking to you every day. He wants you to know Him and follow Him. But the question is, are you listening? And if you are listening, do you know how to recognize His voice?

In this book, we are going to look at the words of Jesus and the example He has set for us. You will not only learn how to recognize His voice, but you will learn to be His disciple:

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a person who listens to, learns from, and follows Jesus. But not because Jesus or anyone else is forcing you to. You should learn to be His disciple because you want to; because you've made the choice to do so.

If you search through the Bible as if you are searching for a hidden treasure, you will discover the greatest treasure of all: a personal relationship with God. You will know Him, recognize His voice, and be able to follow His path for your life. Through Jesus, you can know God in a close, personal way. But you must make the choice to be Jesus' disciple on purpose and pay attention to the right voice.

