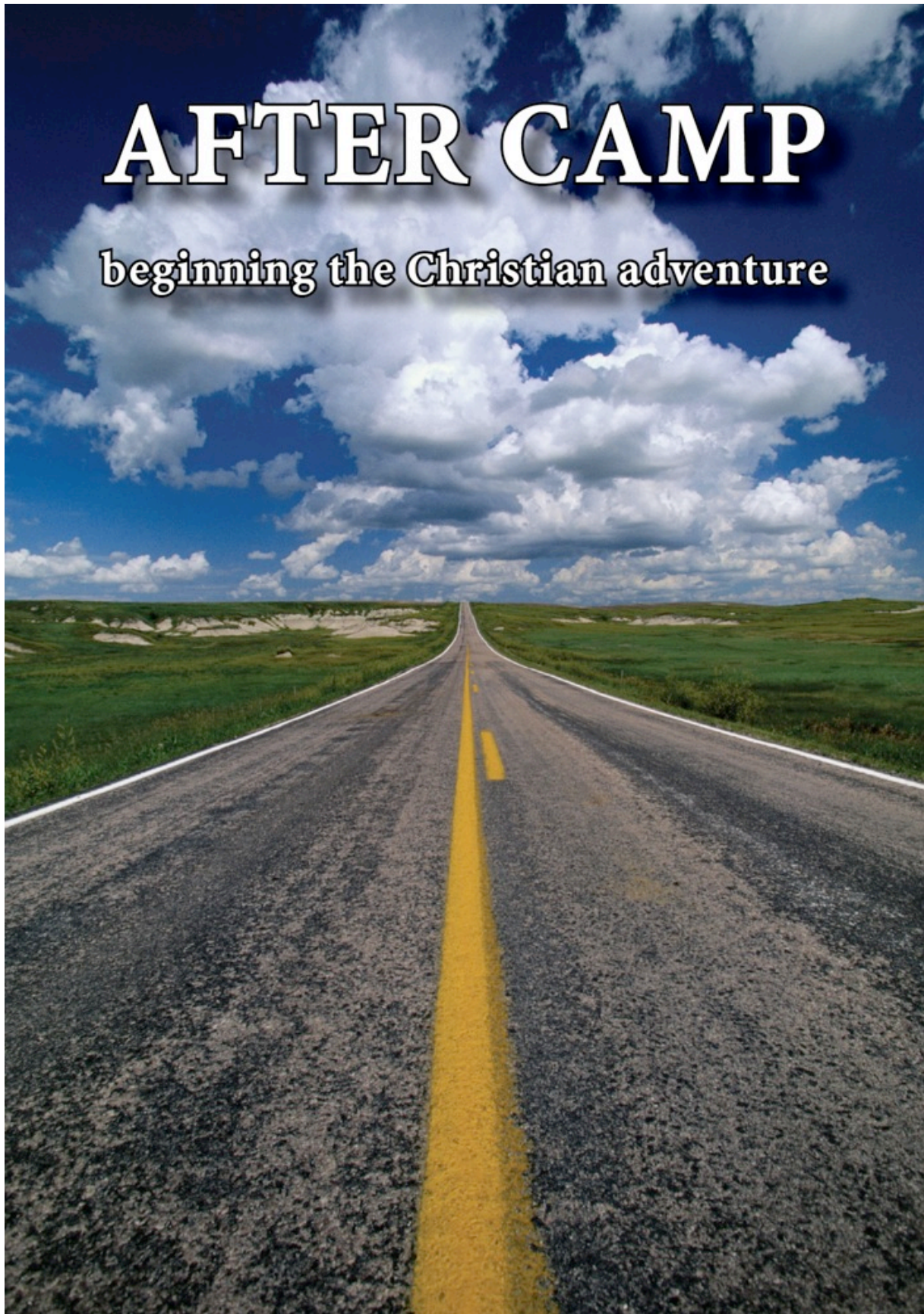


AFTER CAMP

beginning the Christian adventure





After Camp

(additional devotionals)

Kit Sublett

Whitecaps Media

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You're getting the hang of it!

Now that you have had several quiet times you're getting the hang of it. There are still several days' worth of quiet times in here, but my commentary will be shorter because you know what to do now.

Remember to keep praying for your friends and family, confessing your sins and asking the Lord's forgiveness, and also thanking Him for who He is and what He does for us. And while you're at it, make sure to pray for our nation, its leaders, and those in authority over you—always a good thing (see Romans 13:1).

Quiet Time 5

Begin your QT today by reading Mark 5.

There are two stories in this chapter: the story of the man with a demon and the story of a dead girl and a sick woman. Do you related to any of the characters in those stories? Who and why?

Each of the people in those stories had problems they wanted Jesus to heal. What are three things in your own life that you wish He would make better?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Pray for those things today. Read James 5:16.

Quiet Time 6

Begin your QT today by reading Mark 6.

In your own words, what happens in the story told in the first six verses of this chapter?

What do you think kept Jesus from being able to heal people there?

Verses 14–29 talk about a guy named John the Baptist. Who was he? See if you can find other places in the Bible that talk about him.

Jesus is very active in this chapter. Which of the miracles talked about in Mark 6 is your favorite? What would it have been like to be there when He did it?

Do you think Jesus is still in the “miracle business” today? I do, and I bet the longer you walk with Him the more you will feel that way, too.

Spend some time thanking Him for being in your life and some time asking Him to be involved in the things you have going on today.

Quiet Time 7

Begin your QT today by reading Mark 7.

This chapter may not have been the easiest to understand so far! If you were to break it down into sections, what would they be? (For instance, verses 1–13 talk about traditions and commandments.)

The next section is verses 14–23. What does it talk about?

The other two sections are miracle stories. What are the two miracles?

One of my favorite descriptions of Jesus occurs at the end of this chapter. Take a look at the last verse in this chapter. How does it say Jesus does things?

Everything Jesus does, He does well, or with excellence. That includes the work that He is doing in your life. Read Philippians 1:6.

Do you remember the list you made earlier of your friends to pray for and things to be thankful for? Remember to keep praying for those things.

Quiet Time 8

Begin your QT today by reading Mark 8.

You can probably see why I suggested you start your walk with Christ by reading the gospel of Mark. It's such a great story and there's action on every page. Mark 8 is certainly a good example of that.

Compare the feeding of 4,000 in this chapter with the feeding of 5,000 in chapter 6. What are the similarities? What are the differences?

Peter was a great follower of Jesus and this chapter tells of an important event in his life. What is it?

In your own life, when was the time that *you* said, "You are the Christ"?

Lastly, what do verses 34–35 mean to you?

Quiet Time 9

Begin your QT today by reading Mark 9.

This chapter tells of the Transfiguration. The dictionary defines “transfiguration” as “a complete change of form or appearance into a more beautiful or spiritual state.” What would it have been like to be with Jesus during this event?

In verses 30–32 what does Jesus tell His disciples? Can you see why the disciples did not understand Him?

What does the fact that Jesus knew what was going to happen to Him mean? Can you think why that might be significant? (Hint: It has to do with the fact that He went willingly.)

Take a look at verses 33–37. What are some ways you can be more of a servant in your own life?

Lastly, spend some time today asking the Lord to reveal to you the things in your life that He would like to change. Ask Him for the ability and strength to change those things. Read 1 Corinthians 10:13.

Quiet Time 10

Begin your QT today by reading Mark 10.

Based on what you have read in this chapter, what did Jesus think about marriage? Re-read the first 10 verses if you're not sure. What do those verses tell you about sex outside of marriage?

Verses 13–16 paint a familiar picture of Jesus. In your own words, what happened in that story? What does it mean to have “childlike” faith?

Another very famous gospel story is the one that follows in verses 17–31, commonly known as “The Rich Young Man” or “The Rich Young Ruler.” Why does the rich young man go away sad?

How are you like the rich young man? How are you different?

What are some things that are difficult for you to give up to Jesus?

Later in this chapter, what do James and John ask of Jesus? What is His response?

Finally, in the first 10 chapters of Mark you have seen many miracles, including the one at the end of this chapter. What part did *faith* play in all of those miracles?

Go back to Mark 9 and pray what the father prayed in verse 24.

Quiet Time 11

We're going to do something different for the next several days, rather than continuing in the gospel of Mark. Don't worry—we'll get back to Mark shortly, and by the time you have finished this book you will have read the entire gospel.

It's a good idea to put a little variety into your quiet times. You don't want to get stuck in a rut. After all, you don't do the exact same things with your best friend every day, do you? In the same way, it's good to "mix things up" in your quiet time occasionally. With that in mind, we're going to spend the next few days looking at *God's character*.

While at first this might seem to have nothing to do with Mark, when we get back to its story you will see that it helps make the gospel make even more sense.

Read Psalm 145:3. What does that verse tell us about God?

It reminds us that God is "unsearchable"—that His greatness is unknowable by us. We serve a great God. And while He is too great for our little minds to fully comprehend Him, we can know some things about Him. We'll look at a few of those things in the days ahead.

Read Psalm 98.

Spend the rest of this quiet time doing the things that Psalm 98 tells us to do. Give thanks and praise to God for what you know about Him.

List four things about God that you think are awesome. Use the Bible (the Psalms especially) if you get stumped:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Quiet Time 12

Let's continue with our study on God's character.

What do you think God is like? Is He friendly? Is He awe-inspiring? Is He harsh? Does He make mistakes? Does He sin?

Read Psalm 100. It's short, only five verses.

Take a look at the last verse. What does it say about God?

This verse, and many others like it, makes a simple statement about God: "The Lord is good."

Think about that for a moment. What does it mean to be truly *good*? Don't confuse it with the idea of good-better-best, where *good* is only so-so. In the Bible, *good* means morally perfect. You can't get any better.

Go back to Mark 10 and read verse 18. What does Jesus say about *good* in that passage?

(By the way, Jesus was not saying He is not God, He was just reminding His questioner that only God—and by extension, Jesus Himself—is truly good.)

Sometimes we forget that God is different than we are. But He is.

Why should we be glad that God is good?

Why should we be troubled that God is good? (Hint: true goodness cannot tolerate anything less than good.)

Spend some time praying for your friends, family, and thanking God for His goodness.

Quiet Time 13

Yesterday we looked at the fact that God is good. Today we're going to see one of the benefits of that goodness.

Read Psalm 23. (It's one of the most famous chapters in the entire Bible, by the way, and you might have heard it before.)

Now read Psalm 18:30.

What does this verse tell us about God?

His way is _____.

His word is _____.

What does a shield do?

Here's how I would summarize this verse and this attribute of God: *He is totally worthy of our trust.* Think about that. What does that mean?

Among other things it means that when God does something or says something, we can put our trust in it. He is not like anyone else you know. *He is totally worthy of our trust.* Even your parents, as great as they are, might fail you at some point. Not God.

Pray for some things in your life and the lives of those you know where God's help is needed, and thank Him for being trustworthy.

Quiet Time 14

We have seen that God is good and that He is trustworthy. Let's consider a third aspect of His character.

God is self-sufficient.

What does that mean?

Go Acts 17:24–25. What does this tell us about God?

You will see by that verse that God does not *need* us. He loves us, yes, but He does not *need* us. We, on the other hand, are anything but self-sufficient. We need the Lord, first of all. We also need family and friends and associates.

Read Isaiah 40:12–17. It gives a striking image of the self-sufficiency and power of God.

The passage uses a technique of asking rhetorical questions. Those are questions that aren't really meant to get an answer, but to make you think. List three of the questions this passage asks about God:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

In each case, the idea is that no one or no thing is greater than the Lord, or helped Him to become what He is.

Spend some time acknowledging to the Lord that you need Him.

Quiet Time 15

God is good. He is trustworthy. He is self-sufficient. We have one more aspect of His character and an aspect of our own character to look at before we dive into the rest of Mark's gospel.

First, the final characteristic of God's character: God is love.

Read 1 John 4:7–8 (note: that's First John—a short letter near the end of the New Testament, not the Gospel of John).

Isn't it great that we serve a God who is loving? Yes, He is morally perfect and without sin, but He is also loving. Here's a great way to describe His love for us: *He always wants what's best for us.*

Think about that: because God loves us, He always wants what's best for us. Not necessarily what's easiest or most pleasant, but what is *best*.

Now look at another passage in 1 John: read 1 John 1:5–6.

In the Bible, “darkness” is a metaphor for sin. God has no sin in Him. In fact, just as in life, where light (God) exists, there can be no darkness (sin). That means that you and I have a problem. We are sinful (see Romans 3:10–12), and God by His very nature cannot tolerate sin.

You might already see where this is going, but if you don't, don't worry, because in the final chapters of Mark you will see how God provided the perfect solution to our problem. A way for two aspects of His character—His love and His righteousness—to be satisfied without compromising His character.

Spend a few minutes thinking about the following questions:

What is good about light?

What is bad about darkness?

What is good about love?

Finish your time by spending some time with the Lord and bringing to Him the things that are on your heart for today.

Quiet Time 16

The final chapters of Mark are going to bring together those aspects of God's character that we have been studying. A refresher before we continue:

God is good.

God is trustworthy.

God is self-sufficient (He doesn't need us or anyone else).

God is love.

Now let's get back to Mark. Read Mark 11.

In all four gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—lots of time is spent on just one week in Jesus' life, His final week on earth. The fact that they all spend so much time on it tells us that it must be significant.

Look in the other gospels and see if you can find the story of Jesus' last week. What chapters talk about Jesus' last week in Matthew? _____ In Luke? _____ In John? _____.

What city do those events take place in?

Why did Jesus do what He did to the fig tree?

Chapter 11 ends with Jesus' authority questioned. Where did Jesus' authority come from?

Quiet Time 17

Read Mark 12.

What do you think is the point of the story about paying taxes to Caesar?

In verses 28–34 Jesus talks about the Great Commandment. What does Jesus say is the greatest commandment?

Looking at your own life, how do you do with obeying that commandment? Have you seen positive progress in that since you went to camp?

What can you do *today* to improve on loving the Lord

—with all your soul? _____

—with all your mind? _____

—with all your strength? _____

Work on those things today and pray for the Lord to help you do so.

Lastly, why did Jesus consider the widow's gift better than the others? Why should we be generous? Can you think of some ways that you can begin to give of yourself in a sacrificial way?

Quiet Time 18

Read Mark 13.

This chapter talks a lot about the end of the world as we know it. For decades movies and books have been written about the way the world will end. The difference between them and the Bible is that the Bible actually knows how it's going to end.

Why do you think Jesus thought it was important to tell His friends about the future?

List several things that this chapter tells you about the way the world is going to end.

Quiet Time 19

Read Mark 14.

The events of the final week are beginning to speed up and this chapter sets the stage for the remaining days of Jesus' earthly life.

Who was plotting to kill Jesus?

Even though they were doing the plotting, for whom did Jesus actually die?

What was the gift of the woman in verses 3–9?

Who betrayed Jesus?

The Passover was a celebration of God's deliverance of the Jews from slavery. (Extra points if you can research and find some of the significant parallels between Passover and Christ's death.)

Who was Jesus celebrating Passover with?

Jesus introduced a new tradition the night of the Last Supper, one that all Christian churches still follow. Do you know what it is? (It's talked about in verses 22–25.)

Who does Jesus predict is going to betray Him? How many times is he going to betray Him?

What evidence is there in this chapter that Jesus went to His death willingly?

What evidence is there in this chapter that, though He went willingly, it was still difficult for Him to do?

Make sure to thank the Lord again today for what He went through for you on the night of His betrayal.

Quiet Time 20

Read Mark 15.

Who was Pilate?

Who was the man that was released instead of Jesus?

Re-read verses 16–20. How does it make you feel?

Who was crucified along with Jesus?

What does Jesus cry out in verse 34? Read Psalm 22:1–2 and you will see that Jesus was quoting the Bible. What is the significance of those words?

I trust that you heard about the crucifixion at camp. Do you remember from your conversations there what Jesus' death on the cross accomplished?

Read Romans 5:6–8.

If you have never done so, thank Jesus for dying for your sins on the cross. If you would like to begin a relationship with Him, there is no better time than now. If you have already done so, tell Him again how much you appreciate all He has done for you.

Spend some time praying for your friends and family that they may begin to understand God's tremendous love for us in Christ.

Quiet Time 21

Read Mark 16.

The fact that Jesus rose from the dead is of wonderful significance! Among other things it's what gives us the ability to have a personal relationship with Him now. He's still alive!

Several days ago we took a detour from Mark and studied a few aspects of God's character. Among other things, the Bible tells us that,

—God is good.

—God is trustworthy.

—God is self-sufficient (He doesn't need us or anyone else).

—God is love.

(Remember that Jesus, the Father, and the Spirit all have the same qualities.)

Can you begin to see how these attributes come into play with the death and resurrection of Jesus?

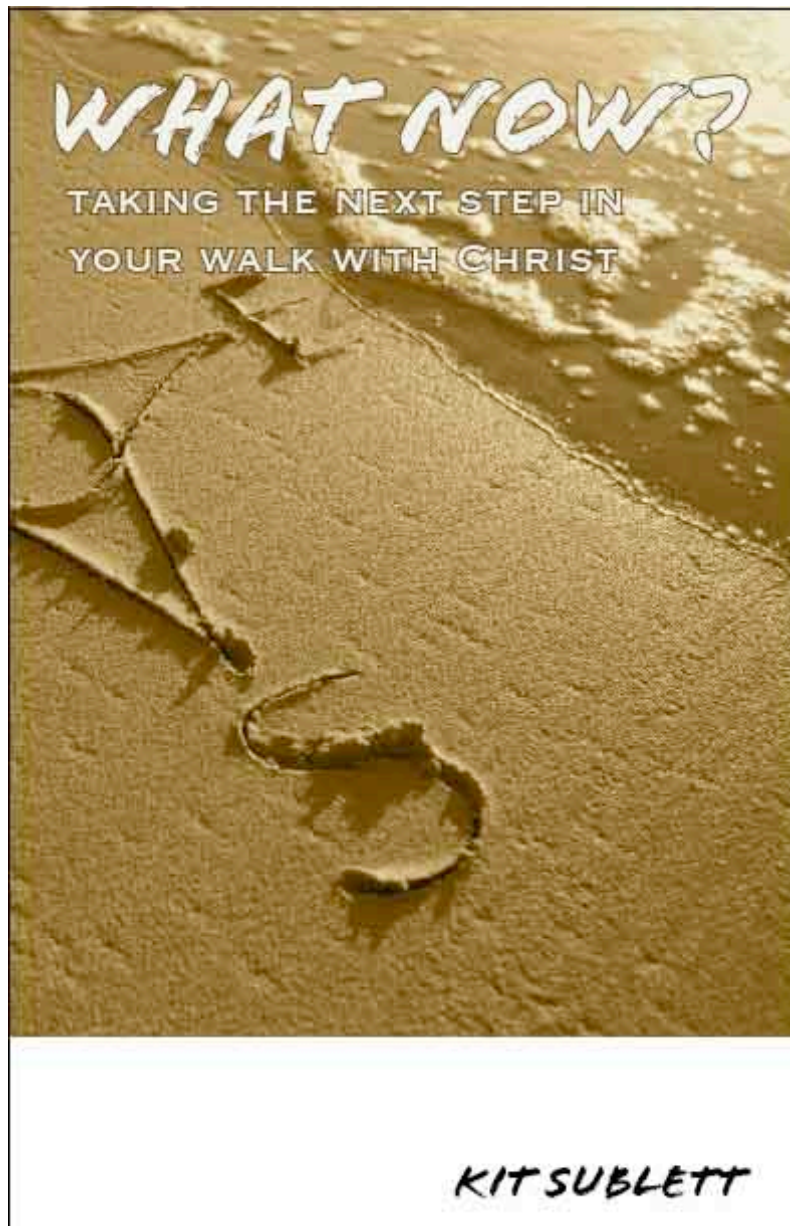
His moral perfection or absolute goodness means that He cannot tolerate sin. Since we've all sinned, that presents a real problem for us! The fact that He is trustworthy means that we can depend completely on what He says. The fact that He is good also means that He would never go back on His promises, giving us yet another reason to know He is trustworthy. The fact that He is self-sufficient reminds us that God does not need us; instead He chooses us out of love.

Finally, the fact that He is love explains why He would go to the lengths that He has gone to allow us into a relationship with Him. God is amazing, isn't He?

John 3:16 may be the most famous verse in the Bible. That's in large part because it sums up the gospel so well: "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."

Yesterday you read a few verses from Romans 5. Now read a few more: read Romans 5:6–11.

Spend some time reflecting on all that you have learned over these last few weeks. Also spend some time praying for all the various people and things the Lord has put on your heart.



You might also enjoy reading *What Now? Taking the Next Step in Your Walk with Christ* by Kit Sublett (Kit is the author of *After Camp*). You can find this e-book where you bought *After Camp*.