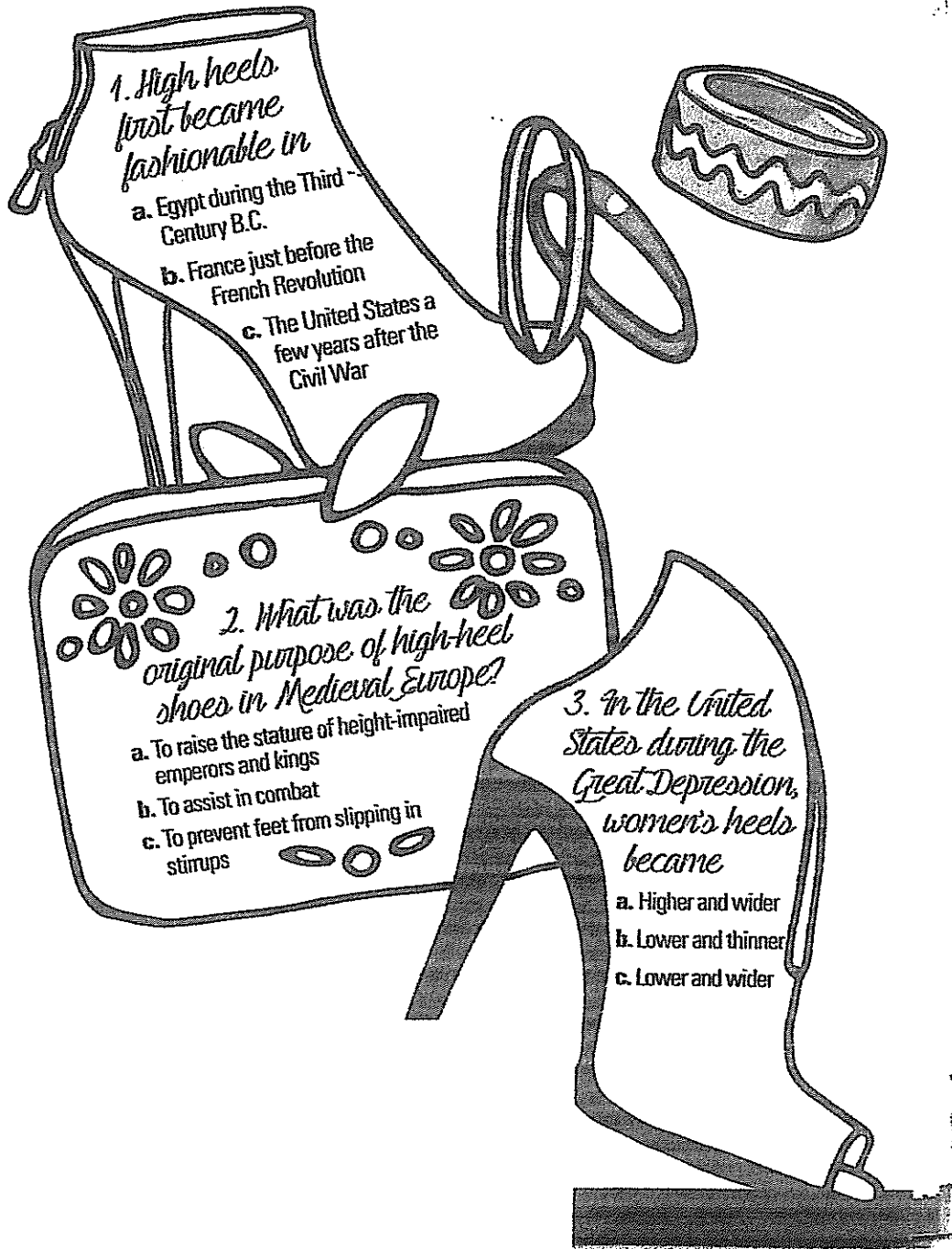
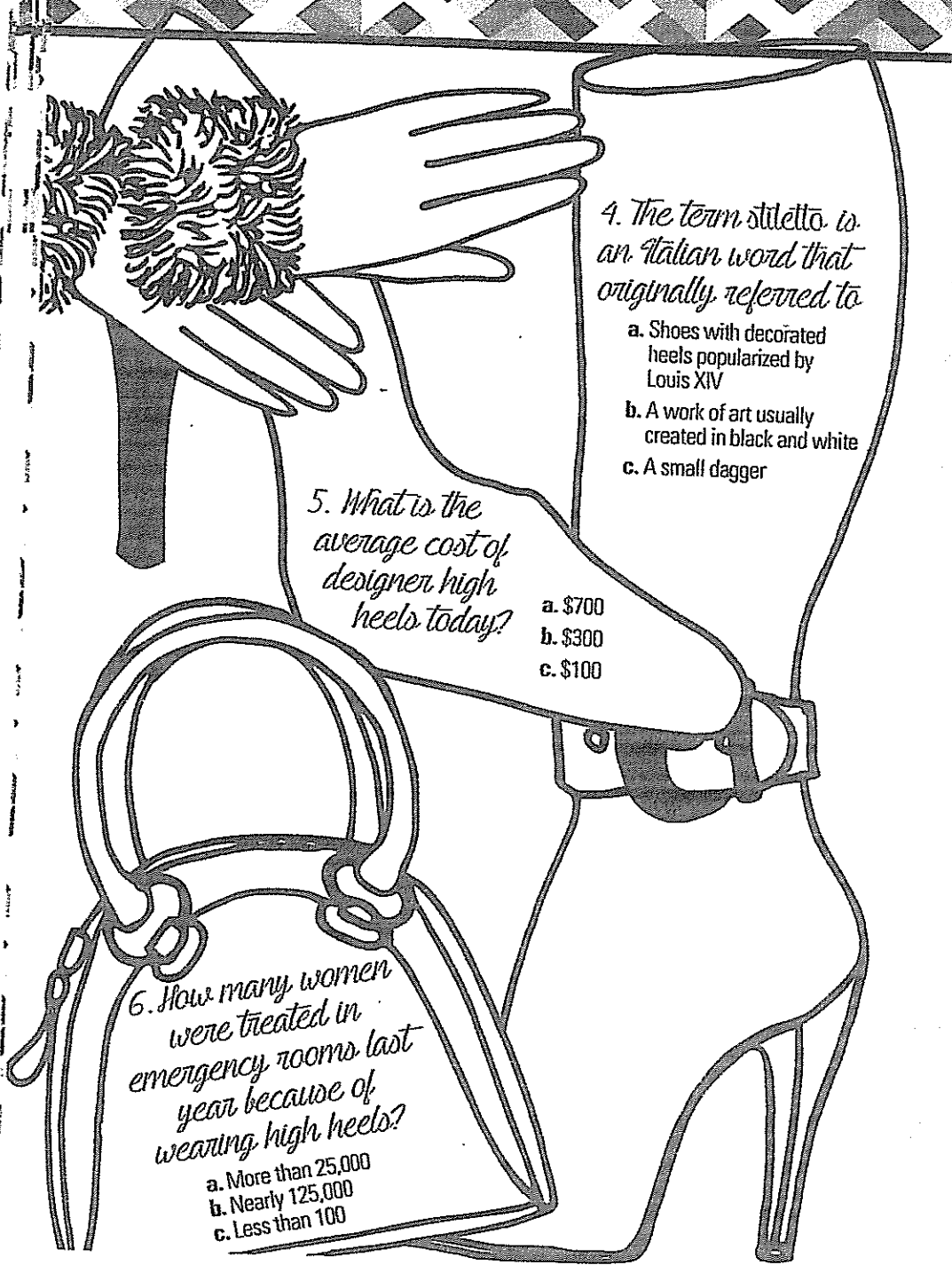


## For Fun & Friendship

Work with a partner or in your small group to see how many of these questions about high heels you can answer correctly.





4. The term stiletto is an Italian word that originally referred to

- a. Shoes with decorated heels popularized by Louis XIV
- b. A work of art usually created in black and white
- c. A small dagger

5. What is the average cost of designer high heels today?

- a. \$700
- b. \$300
- c. \$100

6. How many women were treated in emergency rooms last year because of wearing high heels?

- a. More than 25,000
- b. Nearly 125,000
- c. Less than 100

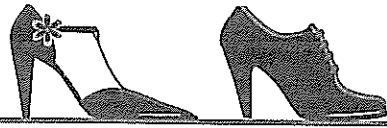


## *For Fun & Friendship*

See how quickly you can unscramble the following letters to spell different types of footwear.

1. PERLISP .....
2. YOBOCW TOBO .....
3. TALFS .....
4. FLLIOPP .....
5. UMPSP .....
6. TLESAC .....
7. FLAER .....
8. HHIG EHESL .....
9. KESAENR .....
10. APT OESHS .....





### How Do I Fit In?

[Jesus said,] "The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world." John 15:19

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. Romans 12:2



### When I Can't Take Another Step

Let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most. Hebrews 4:16

Don't be afraid, for I am with you. Don't be discouraged, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you. I will hold you up with my victorious right hand. Isaiah 41:10



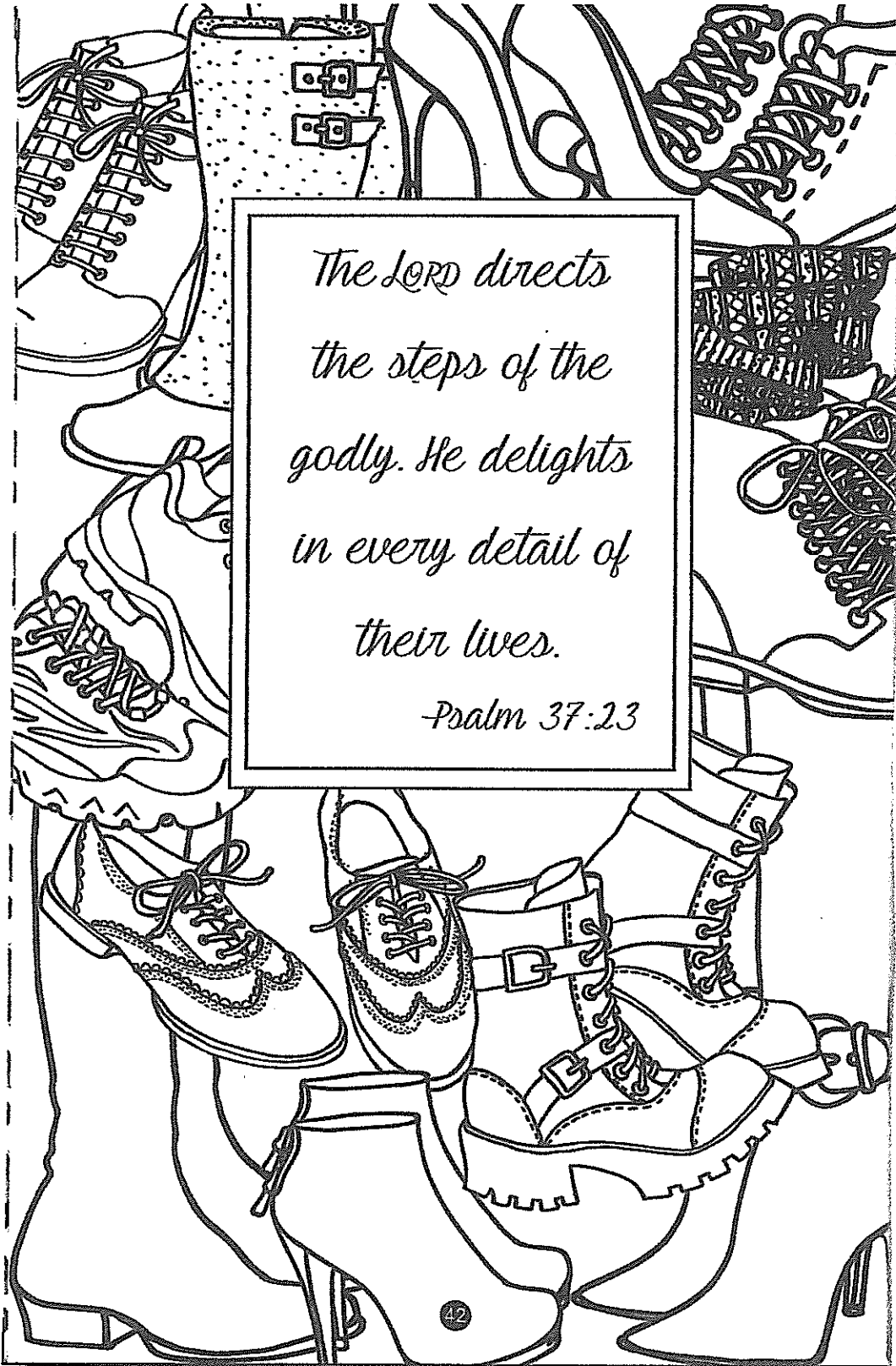
### After a Tragic Fall

If we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness. 1 John 1:9

My health may fail, and my spirit may grow weak, but God remains the strength of my heart; he is mine forever. Psalm 73:26

The Lord is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed. Psalm 34:18





*The LORD directs  
the steps of the  
godly. He delights  
in every detail of  
their lives.*

*-Psalm 37:23*

## 52 Week Bible Reading Plan

	Epistles	The Law	History	Psalms	Poetry	Prophecy	Gospels
Week	(Sunday)	(Monday)	(Tuesday)	(Wednesday)	(Thursday)	(Friday)	(Saturday)
1	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 1-2
2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 4-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 3-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 3-4
3	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 8-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 6-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 12-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 5-7
4	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 12-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 9-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 18-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 8-10
5	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 16-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Josh 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 12-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 23-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 11-13
6	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 20-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Judg 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 15-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 29-33	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 14-16
7	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 24-27	<input type="checkbox"/> Judg 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 18-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 34-39	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 17-19
8	<input type="checkbox"/> Rom 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 28-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Judg 12-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 21-23	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 40-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 20-22
9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 32-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Judg 17-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 24-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 45-50	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 23-25
10	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 36-39	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruth	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 27-29	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 19-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 51-55	<input type="checkbox"/> Matt 26-28
11	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 40-43	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 30-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 21-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 56-61	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 1-2
12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 44-47	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 33-35	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Isa 62-66	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 3-4
13	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Gen 48-50	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 36-38	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 25-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 5-6
14	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 39-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 27-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 7-8
15	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 13-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 21-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 42-44	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 29-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 12-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 9-10
16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Cor 15-16	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Sam 26-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 45-47	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 31-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 17-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 11-12
17	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 48-50	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 33-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 22-26	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 13-14
18	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 17-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 51-53	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 35-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 27-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Mark 15-16
19	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 6-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 10-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 54-56	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 37-38	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 32-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 1-2
20	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 15-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 57-59	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 39-40	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 37-41	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 3-4
21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Cor 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Sam 20-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 60-62	<input type="checkbox"/> Job 41-42	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 42-46	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 5-6
22	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 63-65	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 1	<input type="checkbox"/> Jer 47-52	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 7-8
23	<input type="checkbox"/> Gal 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ex 37-40	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 66-68	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 2-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lamentations	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 9-10
24	<input type="checkbox"/> Eph 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 10-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 69-71	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 11-12
25	<input type="checkbox"/> Eph 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 14-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 72-74	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 7-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 13-14
26	<input type="checkbox"/> Phil 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Ki 19-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 75-77	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 7	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 13-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 15-16
27	<input type="checkbox"/> Phil 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 78-80	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 8-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 19-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 17-18
28	<input type="checkbox"/> Col 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 81-83	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 25-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 19-20
29	<input type="checkbox"/> Col 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 16-18	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 84-86	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 31-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 21-22
30	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Thes 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 19-21	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 87-89	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 37-42	<input type="checkbox"/> Luke 23-24
31	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Thes 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 22-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Ki 21-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 90-92	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 14-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezek 43-48	<input type="checkbox"/> John 1-2
32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Thes	<input type="checkbox"/> Lev 25-27	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 93-95	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 16	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> John 3-4
33	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Tim 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 96-98	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 17-18	<input type="checkbox"/> Dan 7-12	<input type="checkbox"/> John 5-6
34	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Tim 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 5-8	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 10-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 99-101	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 19	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosea 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> John 7-9
35	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Tim 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 9-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 15-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 102-104	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 20-21	<input type="checkbox"/> Hosea 8-14	<input type="checkbox"/> John 10-12
36	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Tim 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 13-16	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 20-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 105-107	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 22	<input type="checkbox"/> Joel	<input type="checkbox"/> John 13-15
37	<input type="checkbox"/> Titus	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 17-20	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Chr 25-29	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 108-110	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 23-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Amos 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> John 16-18
38	<input type="checkbox"/> Philemon	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 111-113	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 25	<input type="checkbox"/> Amos 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> John 19-21
39	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 114-116	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 26-27	<input type="checkbox"/> Obadiah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 1-2
40	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 5-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 11-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 117-118	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 28	<input type="checkbox"/> Jonah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 3-4
41	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 8-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Num 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 16-20	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 119	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 29-30	<input type="checkbox"/> Micah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 5-6
42	<input type="checkbox"/> Heb 11-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 21-24	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 120-121	<input type="checkbox"/> Prov 31	<input type="checkbox"/> Nahum	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 7-8
43	<input type="checkbox"/> James 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 4-6	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 25-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 122-124	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Habakkuk	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 9-10
44	<input type="checkbox"/> James 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 7-9	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 29-32	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 125-127	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Zephaniah	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 11-12
45	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Pet 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 10-12	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Chr 33-36	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 128-130	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Haggai	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 13-14
46	<input type="checkbox"/> 1Pet 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 13-15	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezra 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 131-133	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Zechariah 1-7	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 15-16
47	<input type="checkbox"/> 2Pet	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 16-19	<input type="checkbox"/> Ezra 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 134-136	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 9-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Zechariah 8-14	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 17-18
48	<input type="checkbox"/> 1John 1-3	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 20-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 1-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 137-139	<input type="checkbox"/> Eccl 11-12	<input type="checkbox"/> Malachi	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 19-20
49	<input type="checkbox"/> 1John 4-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 23-25	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 5-9	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 140-142	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 1-2	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 1-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 21-22
50	<input type="checkbox"/> 2John	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 26-28	<input type="checkbox"/> Neh 10-13	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 143-145	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 3-4	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 7-11	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 23-24
51	<input type="checkbox"/> 3John	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 29-31	<input type="checkbox"/> Esther 1-5	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 146-148	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 5-6	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 12-17	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 25-26
52	<input type="checkbox"/> Jude	<input type="checkbox"/> Deut 32-34	<input type="checkbox"/> Esther 6-10	<input type="checkbox"/> Ps 149-150	<input type="checkbox"/> Song 7-8	<input type="checkbox"/> Rev 18-22	<input type="checkbox"/> Acts 27-28

# Ministry Message



Expanding the Impact of Your Gifts of Encouragement

## Steppin' Out in Faith

### Introduction

Let's play a game: "Bad News, Good News." I'll describe a situation and you tell me if it's bad news or good news.

- You're in a college calculus class. Your professor texts you, asking you to come to her office to go over, as she puts it, "every detail of last Thursday's test."
- You get a letter in the mail from the IRS. They are sending agents to your home to discuss "every detail of your tax returns—for the past six years."
- Your doctor's office phones. They need you to clear tomorrow's calendar and come in for a consultation. The staff needs to make sure you understand "every detail of your diagnosis and the upcoming treatment regimen" your doctor has prescribed.
- This is the last one. The Bible says, "The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives" (Psalm 37:23).

### Getting to the Heart

Some of us are optimists; we may look forward to a conversation about last week's calculus test with our professor as a chance to recruit her as a mentor. On the other hand, who knows what the focus of such a discussion might be! Discussing every detail of one's tax returns with a federal agent doesn't sound like much fun, does it? And the appointment with our doctor? If we've been really sick and are about to take steps toward a promising treatment, we might welcome a detailed discussion. Still, a treatment plan that takes all day to explain?! I'm not so sure that's great news!

So what about that last one, Psalm 37:23? The Lord delights in *every* detail of our lives? If we leave out the word *every*, this verse might encourage us a lot more. Right? What if it read: "The Lord delights in the details of our lives." That leaves us some wiggle room. That makes it possible for us to convince ourselves that he may overlook a detail or two:

- Last night's senseless, ugly argument with our daughter, son, friend or spouse.
- The gossip we share way too often.
- The selfishness and self-centeredness which guides so many of our decisions.
- The impatience with which we care for a toddler or an aging parent.

But no. There's no misreading the verse. That pesky *every* is there, plain for all to see. The Lord, the Creator of all that exists, knows all the details, cares about all the details—every last one of them. It would be bad news,

terrible news, the worst news of all . . . except for these details, the details of the plan by which our Lord has saved us:

*Those who depend on the law to make them right with God are under his curse, for the Scriptures say, "Cursed is everyone who does not observe and obey all the commands that are written in God's Book of the Law." So it is clear that no one can be made right with God by trying to keep the law. For the Scriptures say, "It is through faith that a righteous person has life."*

Galatians 3:10–11

Through faith, we are righteous. Through faith in Jesus, our Savior, we have life, a whole new life. Through faith, we are the godly, the blameless, holy ones the Bible describes. This is all God's gift—in every detail! It's free! But it's not cheap. It costs us nothing; it cost God everything! Jesus died—died a very real death, a gory death in every detail—to make our new life, our righteousness before God possible!

That makes the truth of Psalm 37:23 totally and overwhelmingly good news!

*The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives.*

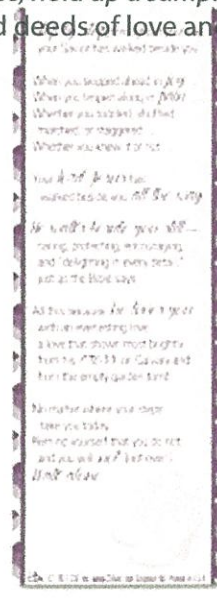
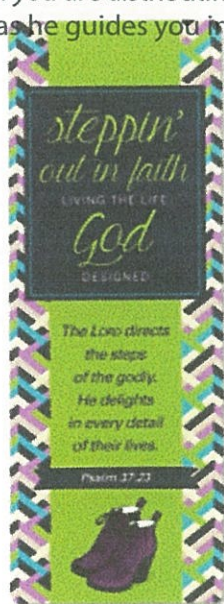
Psalm 37:23

As you walk through life day by day, step by step, you never walk alone. Jesus walks beside you. He is your faithful Friend, Defender, Savior. He guides your steps, delighting in each.

Your steps today or this week may take you into your professor's office or into your doctor's exam room. You may tiptoe into your daughter's bedroom or your friend's kitchen to apologize. You may even step into a detailed IRS audit. But wherever you go, you can walk in humility, confidence, and courage. Your Lord delights in you! You are forgiven, righteous, and dearly loved!

## Taking It Home

As you leave here today, remember Jesus' constant, faithful presence. To help you do that, each of you will receive (*name the item you are distributing and, perhaps, hold up a sample of it*). Let the sunshine of your Savior's smile light your path as he guides you into words and deeds of love and service that will delight him—and you, too!







## God's Direction Is Always Best®

### Getting Started

*Bookmark 1 Peter 2:21; Romans 6:6–11; John 16:33; and Galatians 2:20 in your Bible.*

### Introduction

It would be the motorcycle road trip to end all road trips! For months, Jack and his buddies planned their trip of a lifetime. Jack led the effort as the friends worked together to develop their route, including as many scenic vistas as possible. They negotiated food and lodging plans and everyone eagerly contributed ideas for predetermined stops along the way. With great anticipation and enthusiasm, the men began their road trip countdown!

On the very first day of the trip, a pounding rain threatened to dampen the motorcycle riders' spirits. Refusing to let that happen, Jack grabbed his rain suit, and soon the group was geared up—they wouldn't let a little shower sabotage their plans.

Then, just an hour into their trip of a lifetime, a massive traffic jam forced the bikers to revise their original route. It just so happened that their chosen detour led the guys onto a side road, gleaming with fresh oil. "And this is just the first day," Jack sighed.

What a trip! Memorable? Yes! Filled with unforeseen challenges? Definitely!

### Getting to the Heart

Have your carefully designed plans ever gone haywire? It happens! Expensive car repairs. Hurtful family conflicts. An unanticipated company downsize. Failing health.

How, then, do we successfully navigate this road trip called life? God gave us the directions in 1 Peter 2:21. *(Read the verse.)*

This verse urges us to follow Jesus' lead, but how is that even possible? Whenever we attempt to love our heavenly Father as Jesus did—with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength—we fail. Miserably. When life takes an unexpected, negative turn, we question God's kindness. We chafe under our Lord's guidance, and we often question his direction.

Follow in Jesus' steps? How is that even possible? Christ was forever thinking about and tending to the needs of others, while we are detoured by selfishness. Instead of following Christ's lead, we choose to travel down a road pockmarked by self-centeredness, self-indulgence, and self-promotion.

Follow Jesus' example? How is that even possible? He rejected bigotry, injustice, and violence, while we are too easily swayed by the pressures of our culture, looking for revenge rather than seeking forgiveness and peace.

God gives us all the direction we need, but our sinful nature knocks us off track. Following Jesus' lead, walking in his steps, how is any of this possible?!

On our own, it's simply not. But, God has made it possible in the cross of our Savior. Our heavenly Father has set into motion the ultimate plan to overcome all the hurt, the disappointment, and the mistakes we make in this world—it's the plan of salvation.

From the very moment Jesus was born, he was on his way to the cross. And when he got there, he made the ultimate sacrifice for us. His resurrection three days later sealed our salvation. Now, when God looks at us, he can't see the stain of our sins. Instead, God sees Jesus' steady footsteps, Jesus' selfless actions, and Jesus' perfect love for the Father. *(Read Romans 6:6–11.)*

Because of all Jesus did for us, we can live for God's glory! We can follow God's path and walk in God's ways, resting in the forgiveness and peace Jesus has won for us. As Psalm 48:14 explains, "He will be our guide." We can follow Christ's example because God is with us on life's journey. And Jesus isn't just along for the ride, sleeping in the backseat as we drive. He's out ahead of us, behind us, and beside us. In fact, he lives in us! *(Read John 16:33 and Galatians 2:20.)*

Relying on Christ, we can find joy even as we encounter life's potholes, detours, and breakdowns. Regardless of life's circumstances, we will arrive safely at the heavenly home Jesus is even now preparing for us.

Until then, our heavenly Father freely provides strength for life's journey—the strength of Christ within us! With his protection and power, we go forward confidently, no matter what may happen on the road ahead.

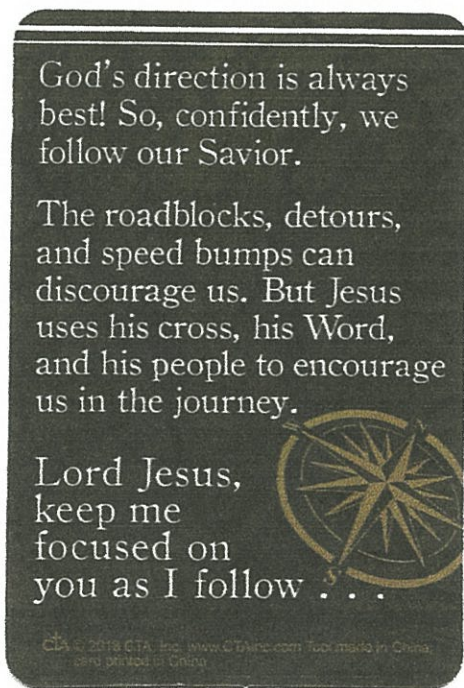
## **Taking It Home**

***If you are speaking on Father's Day, use this ending:*** Today we honor all of the fathers and father figures who travel with us along life's highway. We are genuinely thankful for everything you do for us! We know you are not perfect, nor are we. Instead, we are all perfectly forgiven in Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Our prayer for you is that you follow Christ's lead—that you remain in his Word, confidently trust in Jesus, and keep on encouraging one another to follow that lead as well—in our families, our church, and our community.

As you leave today, each of you men will receive *(name the God's Direction Is Always Best® item you are distributing)*. Let it remind you of Jesus, of his love and the forgiveness he won for you on the cross, and of God's never-ending guidance on this road trip called life.

**If you are speaking at a men's retreat, men's ministry meeting, or on some other occasion, use this ending:** Traveling along the highway of life isn't always easy. Detours and potholes distract us all along the way. We all know we're not perfect. Instead, we are all perfectly forgiven through Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Our prayer is that we follow Christ's lead—that we remain in his Word, confidently trusting in Jesus, and encouraging others to follow that lead—in our families, our church, and our community.

As you leave, each of you men will receive (*name the God's Direction Is Always Best® item you are distributing*). Let it remind you of Jesus, of his love and of the forgiveness he won for you on the cross, and of God's never-ending guidance on this road trip called life.



COMPASS KEY CHAIN WITH CARD

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# GDB18DA

The Scripture quotation is from the King James Version of the Bible.

