



# NO FILTER

Stop Hiding. Live Unhindered.



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*No Filter: Stop Hiding. Live Unhindered.*  
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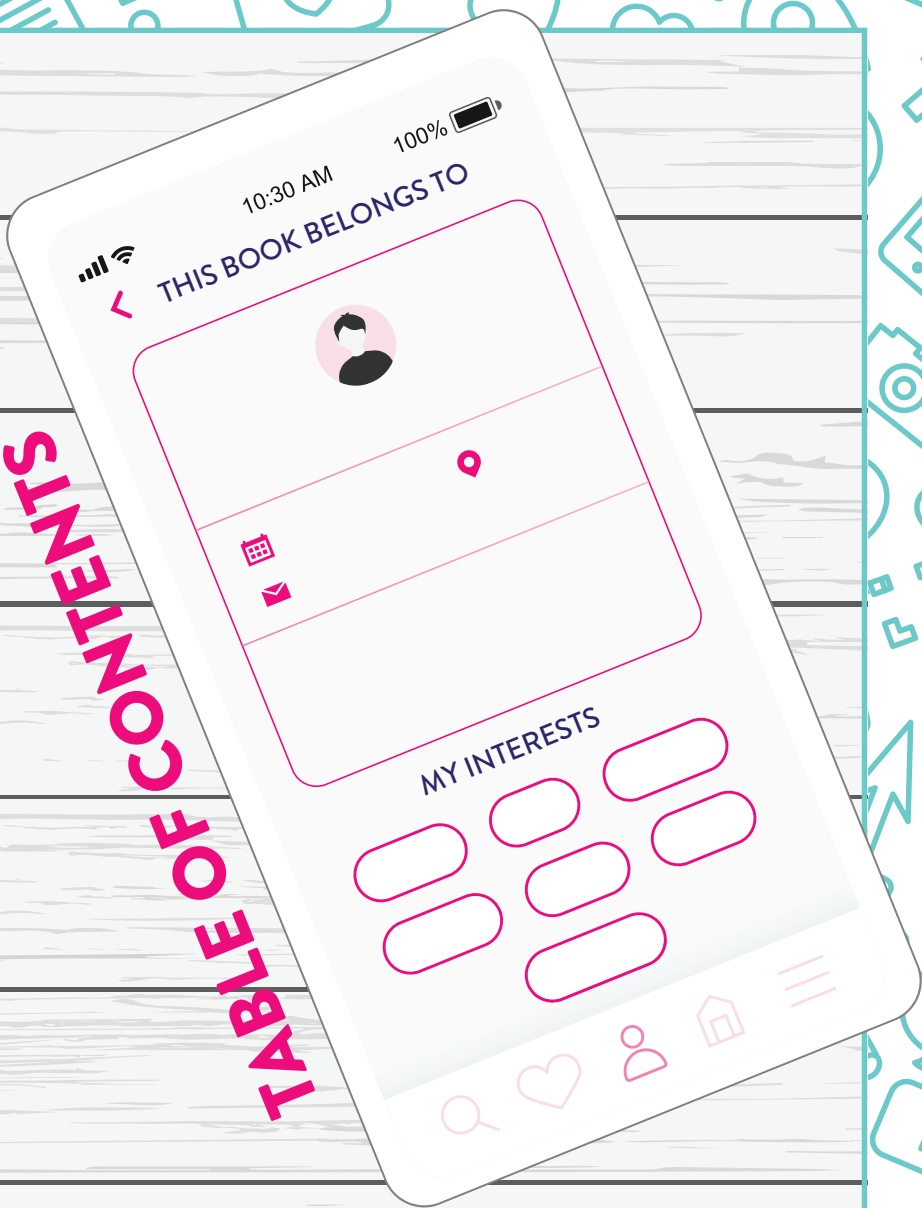
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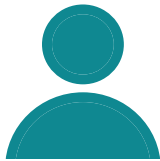
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# WELCOME TO NO FILTER

## WE ALL HIDE.

We hide behind filters that distort reality. They may seem harmless, but the truth is that filters are dangerous. Our view of God is affected. Our view of ourselves is inaccurate. Our view of others is skewed.

When we see God clearly, we aren't worried about the past mistakes we've made or about gaining others' approval. Our goal is to please God, reflect his image to the world, and invite others into unfiltered life.

But we can only do that if we step out in faith. The good news is that God offers us freedom to remove our filters, stop hiding, and live unhindered.

## HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW AS YOU GO THROUGH THIS STUDY:

### GOD WANTS TO CONNECT WITH YOU.

In fact, he's looking forward to it. But how ready are you to connect with him? As you go in and out of the sessions and devotional times, make sure you are willing to listen to him and learn from him. He promises that he will come near to you if you come near to him (James 4:8). Try it!

### WHAT YOU PUT INTO THIS STUDY IS WHAT YOU'LL GET OUT OF IT.

There are people all around you who have spent a lot of time praying for you and getting ready to invest in you. You'll probably meet some new people, hear some new speakers, and get a chance to spend some quality time with God and with friends. Take advantage of it! Ask hard questions. Commit to being authentic and honest. God wants to use this time and these people in your life.



# SESSION ONE INTRO

## SEEING GOD CLEARLY

Have you ever had a pen pal or an online friend you've never met IRL? You can chat, write messages, and share photos and videos. You can get to know each other's friends and family, spill your secret hopes and dreams, and learn all about each other's lives. But if you ever meet face to face, there will still be so much to know about each other that you just couldn't discover before. Especially since you both might be hiding and filtering out the parts of your lives that you don't want others to see.

Knowing God can feel like looking through a foggy mirror or having an online friend. The apostle Paul wrote, "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Cor. 13:12). It's hard to know if we're seeing God clearly because we're not face to face. Plus, our own filters and assumptions get in the way. Thankfully, God's vision is 100% clear, and he promises to give us everything we need to follow him and see him more clearly (2 Pet. 1:3-4).

## LARGE GROUP SESSION 1: SEEING GOD CLEARLY

These two pages are designed so you can take note of anything that stands out to you and that you think is worth remembering during the large group talk. This talk will set the stage for the rest of the session. Consider writing down main points, quotes, Bible verses, and any questions that pop into your head.

If you were creating a social media profile for God, what character traits, interests, and favorite quotes would you use in the bio? Bonus: Where did you get this info about God (e.g., Scripture, songs, common knowledge, etc.)?

How does knowing we are God's image-bearers affect the view you have of yourself and of others around you?



SMALL GROUP SESSION 1 A 2ND LOOK

# Seeing God Clearly

Imagine you're watching TV, and a preacher is on saying something like, "God wants you to be happy! He blesses those who have the faith to believe! No matter your illness or trouble, God will shower you with blessing if you just have enough faith!" These are key teachings of the Prosperity Gospel—believe hard enough and life will be a breeze. This might sound good and seem true, but is it actually? Joyce Meyer, who is well-known for writing and speaking about the Prosperity Gospel, recently commented, "There's nowhere in the Bible where we're promised that we'll never have any trouble. I don't care how much faith you've got, you're not gonna avoid ever having trouble in your life."<sup>1</sup>

Meyer took a step back from the assumptions she'd made about God and his character and filtered the message through the truth of Scripture.



**Why is it important to cross-check ideas or assumptions about God with the Bible?**

**How well do you currently filter what you hear about God through Scripture?**

**What are some assumptions you have held or currently hold about God, and how does that affect the way you feel about him?**

**How does the way you currently view God affect the way you view yourself?**

<sup>1</sup> Russell S. Woodbridge, "Prayer Request: More Negative Prosperity - Gospel Stories." *The Gospel Coalition*, May 31, 2019, accessed September 1, 2019, <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/pray-negative-prosperity-gospel-stories/>.

SMALL GROUP SESSION 1 A LITTLE DEEPER

# Seeing God Clearly

Take a look at each of these Bible passages and get ready to talk through the following questions with your group.

**1 Corinthians 13:11–12:** *“When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.”*

What are some examples of childish behavior?

Spiritually speaking, in what ways are we childish, and how do we “grow up”?

What are our limitations as humans, and how will that change when we are in heaven?

**Matthew 13:15:** *“For this people’s heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed, lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and turn, and I would heal them.”*

What is something familiar in your life that God may be using to speak to you (for example, your hobbies, schedule, friends, etc.)?

Why do you think it’s so easy to ignore these everyday messages from God?

*2 Corinthians 3:16–18a: “But when one turns to the Lord, the veil is removed. Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another.”*

What do you think it means that “the veil is removed”?

How does the glory of God change us?

What image are we being transformed into, and how does this encourage you?

## APPLY IT

WHAT IS ONE THING YOU’RE GOING TO COMMIT TO THIS WEEK TO GET A CLEARER PICTURE OF WHO GOD IS?

BE SPECIFIC:  
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

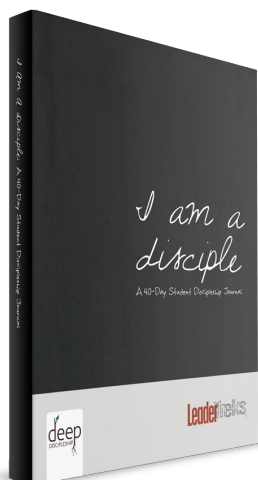
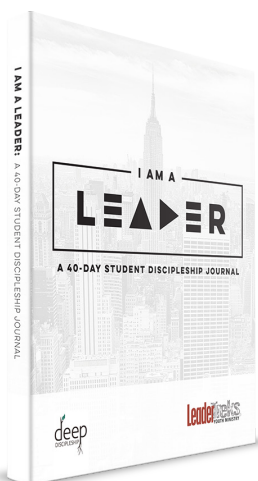
WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO DO IT?

IS THERE SOMEONE WHO CAN KEEP YOU ACCOUNTABLE?

NOTES:

# KEEP GOING!

Check out these journals made just for you:  
(Go to [leadertreks.org](http://leadertreks.org) for more info.)



## LeaderTreks has summer internships!

If you are in college, you can join a LeaderTreks staff member to lead missions or wilderness trips. Learn more about our internship program at [leadertreks.org/jobs](http://leadertreks.org/jobs).



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