



MAKE IT COUNT

A REFLECTION GUIDE

We all have a desire within us to make our lives count, to make a difference, to impact the world with the one life we've been given. The people who inspire us most are the ones doing just that. *How are you making your life count? What is getting in your way? How are you defining a life that really counts?* Each one of us has been given one life and God has incredible purpose for all our days, years, and seasons. We created this reflection resource to help you lean into making your life truly count for God's glory and other people's good. May you experience Jesus running right into your life and inspiring you as you spend time with Him throughout this guide.

REFLECT

- Who comes to mind when you think of people who are really making their lives count?
- What sets their lives apart and makes you think of them versus other people?
- What are some things people do that “waste” their lives?

READ

Fill in the blank with what you can make count.

*For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. **Ephesians 2:10***

Make why you were _____ count.

Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. **Philippians 1:6**

Make the _____ count.

Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up. Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers. **Galatians 6:9-10**

Make the _____ count.

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God. **2 Corinthians 1:3-4**

Make your _____ count.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. **James 1:2-4**

Make your _____ count.

You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives. **Genesis 50:20**

Make the _____ count.

In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. **1 Peter 1:6–7**

Make your _____ count.

But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. **2 Corinthians 12:9**

Make your _____ count.

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. **1 Timothy 1:15–16**

Make your _____ count.

*...but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. **Isaiah 40:31***

Make your _____ count.

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.

Romans 5:3-5

Make your _____ count.

*...to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will be called oaks of righteousness, a planting of the Lord for the display of his splendor. **Isaiah 61:3***

Make the _____, _____, and _____

REFLECT

- How do you think you can make more meaning out of the pain or hardships you have had to endure?
- How have you seen God use a hard chapter in your life for good in someone else's?

- What do you think moves a person to say, "I want to make my pain count for other people's healing?"
- What is a pain you have suffered that you hope God uses to help others?

We often assume only the good chapters can count- the fun, victorious, strong parts of our stories. So when we find ourselves in a hard chapter- a chapter of pain or failure, shame or hardship- we often can't wait to skip it. But the reality is, we all experience tough chapters. We fall and ache and grieve. We make mistakes, and we feel weak. Do we write these parts of our stories off as meaningless, a waste, useless? Look at our Lord. **Jesus made His life count, every chapter, even the painful ones.**

The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and said, "This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me. In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me." 1 Corinthians 11:23b-25

The word Jesus used when He broke bread and gave thanks is the word *eucharisteo*. Jesus wasn't thankful for the mockery.

*He wasn't thankful for the spitting.
He wasn't thankful for the betrayal.
He wasn't thankful for the whipping.
Jesus wasn't thankful for the nails.*

He was thankful for His brokenness that He knew would bring about our wholeness. He was thankful for what God could do with pain. He was thankful that God's ultimate plan was to use pain for good.

If God can purpose His pain, He can surely purpose ours.

*He can purpose your tears.
He can purpose your past.
He can purpose your failure.
He can purpose your agony.
He can purpose your divorce.*

This doesn't mean you have to like the pain, but you can like that God promises to purpose it. **God's purpose prevails all pain.** If you can't see purpose now, you are promised that you will. Keep watching for it, Keep counting on it, keep trusting it. He is a God who is in the business of trading pain in for healing, for redemption, for good.

Isaiah 53 says, "*By his wounds we are healed.*" Our God, He trades His great pain for our great healing. That is what He does. Let us be reminded of our God who said thank you for His own pain that He knew would be our gift. Let us thank Him for the little and the small, for the past and the present, for the healing and the good and even for the pain that keeps drawing us back to His mercy.

REFLECT

- What do you notice about Jesus' gratitude and how might that help you grow in the way you respond to the hard things?
- How did Jesus purpose His pain in your life? Or another way to ask: How has Jesus' pain impacted your life?
- We all have one life- what do you think it looks like to really make it count?

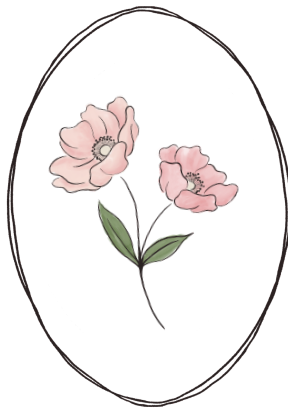
RESPOND

Dear Jesus,

Thank you for my life. Thank you that you made me and have a plan for my life. I pray that you purpose it for your glory and other people's good. I pray you purpose every chapter, the good, the bad, the ugly, to make a difference in the lives of others. I pray that you take my tears, my laughter, my talents, my learning lessons, my grief and even my shame and use it all for your name's sake. I want to make my whole life count so I hand you the whole thing. Thank you Jesus that you can use every day, every season and every decade of my life to count for something meaningful.

In your name,

Amen.....



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