

# **LISTEN**

**FOR HIS VOICE**

**Sermon Journaling for Teens**



**Elim Ryedale Publishing**



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Written and designed by Elim Ryedale Publishing

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Imprint: Independently published  
ISBN: 9798266031395

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# Welcome

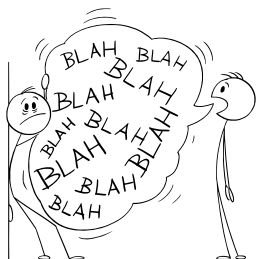
Hello and welcome to your sermon journal!

Sunday mornings – like them or loathe them – come around every week. Some of us will arrive at church bleary eyed and half-awake, others will arrive ready and raring to go!



Whichever camp you're in, eventually the service will begin, the worship will come to an end and the inevitable sermon will take place.

Do you meet it with dread? A full 20 minutes or more of someone just talking at you – no visuals, no interactive content – just talking!



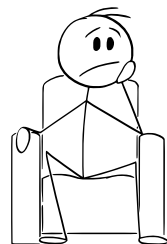
Do you meet it with relief? You can now switch off, catch up on that sleep you missed out on by getting to church on time, and sneakily scroll through your social media to keep yourself entertained.

Or, do you meet it with expectation? A chance for God to speak to you? To be challenged and to improve your walk with Him?



Not every church has an opportunity for teenagers to meet together on a Sunday morning in a space that's just for them, and so therefore, there's no option but to sit through a sermon that's been created for adults.

It's very easy to dismiss what you hear, thinking it's not for you or that you can't learn from it, making church at times feel a little bit boring, and perhaps frustrating when you think of all the other things you could be doing.



But hidden within these sermons are little gems. You will find not only encouraging words, Godly advice, thoughts that challenge and cause you to reflect, but you will also hear God's voice, talking directly to you.

With a little bit of guidance, you will be able to tap into the important parts of the sermon which will benefit you and will help you discover more about God and what He's doing in your life and in the lives of those around you.



And that's what I hope this journal will become, a tool you can use to help focus on the parts of a sermon that God is highlighting to you, so that you can take home the words He speaks, giving you life and hope for the week ahead.

# What to write in your journal

**Title:** Sometimes the speaker will tell you the title, but often they don't, so think about everything you've heard and create your own!

**Main scripture:** Simply write the book of the Bible, the chapter and the verses that the speaker is using. E.G  
John 3:16-17

## Write it out

In this box you can either:

1. Write out in full the main scripture that the speaker is using, or if it's too long...
2. Write out the verse that stands out to you the most.

Sometimes writing something as well as reading it/listening to it helps the words sink in better. As you are writing, a particular word might stand out to you or an image might appear in your head, you can underline or circle these words as you write out the verse.

## Stand out words

This is the place to write any words or phrases that stand out to you as you are listening to the sermon.

These might be words that challenge you, or that relate to a situation you are going through. They might be words you don't understand and want to look up later at home.

## Extra Verses

The speaker will use lots of Bible verses during the sermon (in addition to the main scripture). Simply write down the book, chapter and verse here so you can look them up as you listen, or later on during the week.

## What points do I hear?

This is where you will write down the main points the speaker is making.

Sometimes the speaker will organise the sermon into different parts and name them, you can write these here.

Other times the speaker might repeat an important phrase, or a particular sentence. Other times, they might say something that makes you think or sit up and pay more attention. All of these things can be written in this box.

If a speaker is telling a story, listen up because they will make a point once they've finished telling it.

If the speaker refers to a different Bible verse, listen up because they are giving you evidence for a point they are making.

## Pictures I imagine...

Sometimes a word, phrase, or story the speaker uses will trigger an image in your mind.

Sometimes these images are memories, or things you like doing, they might be people you know, familiar objects, or places you've been to.

Other times they might be images that appear without you really thinking about it. They might come about whilst listening to a Bible verse or after the speaker has made a key point.

Either way, God might well be speaking to you as you sit and listen to the sermon. In this box, you can draw the images that come to your mind so you can take them away and pray about them during the week. God might be giving you an image to encourage you or someone else.

### What is God saying to me?

It's always good to take time to reflect on what God might be saying to you. This might be one word that is standing out for you, it might be a Bible verse, a story the speaker told, or the whole sermon! Whatever it is, write it down here as soon as you can after the sermon so that God's words are fresh in your mind.

Sometimes you can come to the end of the sermon and feel like God hasn't said anything, and that's ok, but it's good to make note of the most important point of the sermon because in the future it might be just what you need to hear. Writing it down means you can easily come back to read it whenever you need to.

### Prayer

Simply write a prayer that thanks God for what He's taught you and ask Him to help you in the coming week to put it into practice.

You can use this prayer as a guide throughout the week and add to it as you spend time with God outside of a Sunday morning.

See page 116 for templates that help you write a prayer.

### Dig deeper during the week...

It's natural to listen to a sermon and then completely forget everything you've heard! That's why it's good to write it down and then look back over what you've written during the week.

In this box you can write down things you want to explore during the week, perhaps look for some more verses about a particular theme the speaker was talking about, research the historical background of the verses used, look up the definition of some words you didn't quite understand, or write the name of the person you'll ask for help or advice if something has challenged you or you need more explanation.

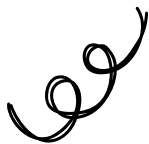
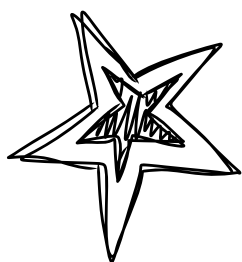


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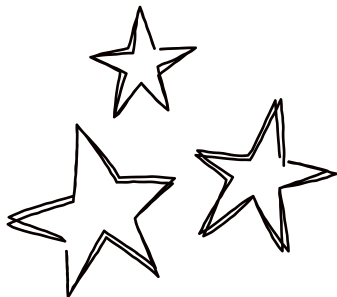
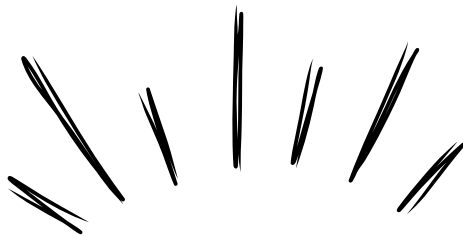
1. Anything extra that doesn't fit into the titles in the boxes
2. If the boxes are too small and you need more room
3. If you want to write down thoughts as you dig deeper during the week and reflect upon what you've learnt.
4. When your mind wanders during the sermon and you need to doodle!



FATHER GOD,  
HELP ME TO HEAR YOUR  
VOICE AS I LISTEN TO YOU  
TODAY.  
AMEN



JESUS



FAITH



**Ready to begin?**  
**Let's go!**

**Date:**

**Title:**

**Main scripture:**

Write it out

Stand out words.

Extra Verses.

What points do I hear?

Pictures I imagine...

What is God saying to me?

Prayer

Dig deeper during the week...

## Extra Page

## Extra Page

## Example Prayers

It's not always easy to write a prayer from scratch with a blank space staring straight back at you and so, on the next few pages, you'll find some templates to use as you grow more confident in writing down your prayers in this journal. Either use these templates to create a whole prayer, use them as a starting point, or mix and match!

I find that writing down my prayers really help me to focus, to really think about what I'm asking God and how I'm responding to what I'm learning. It's not just a fill in the blank exercise, but an opportunity to connect with the God of the universe on a personal level and to have an encounter with Him.

And don't forget, prayer is a two way conversation! As you are writing, take time to pause and see if God is speaking to you and leading you in a particular direction as you pray. Do specific words spring to mind, verses in the Bible or names of people you know? Use these to guide your prayers as you write.

### Template 1 -General

Father God,

Thank you for the opportunity to learn \_\_\_\_\_ today.  
I really feel like you've spoken to me about this. Give me the  
motivation to pray about this during the week, helping me  
to\_\_\_\_\_.

Amen



## Template 2 - Prayer for action

Jesus,

I am overwhelmed/excited by what you've taught me today.  
Teach me more about \_\_\_\_\_ and show me ways to put this  
into action.

This week, help me to \_\_\_\_\_ so that I can begin to live out  
your words and see change in my life and in the lives of those  
around me.

Help me to reflect on what you've taught me and not forget  
about it when I go home. Remind me to put your word into  
action.

Amen

## Template 3 - Prayer for others

Heavenly father,

As I've listened to the sermon today about \_\_\_\_\_ the  
name of \_\_\_\_\_ keeps coming into my mind and so I want  
to pray for them.

Help \_\_\_\_\_ this week to know that you are \_\_\_\_\_  
and that you are \_\_\_\_\_.

Show me ways that I can help/encourage them and give me  
the courage/strength to do all you ask me.

Amen

### Template 4 - Prayer for forgiveness

Lord Jesus,

Today, as I've listened, I realise I've been living the wrong way. I'm sorry for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

I thank you that you are a God who forgives. Please wash me clean and help me start again.

From this moment, help me to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.  
This isn't going to be easy, but I know you will be there by my side helping me along the way.

Teach me more about \_\_\_\_\_ this week as I seek to live a life that pleases you.

Amen

### Template 4 - Prayer for thanks

Father God,

There are times when I pray and it's all about me. Please remind me to say thank you to you.

Today, you've given me a reason to say thank you for \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. You are amazing/incredible/loving!

Sometimes it's hard to find the words to describe how I feel, but today, as I'm pausing in the busyness of life, I just want to say \_\_\_\_\_.

Remind me to be grateful.

Amen

# How to Hear God's Voice

Hearing God's voice isn't easy, so how do you know when God is speaking?

God uses different ways to talk to different people. Rarely do people hear the audible voice of God, but more likely they dream dreams, see visions or pictures, and have a peace in their heart. People hear His voice as they read the Bible, through worship songs or in conversation with others.

But because God's voice is often a whisper, it's easy to doubt ourselves, thinking it's our own thoughts and not His. The best way to know His voice is by spending time with Him and getting to know Him better.

You can also check what you've heard against the list on the next page, if it doesn't meet one of these criteria then perhaps it's not God's voice. But don't give up: pray about it, reflect on it, and learn from it, because God does want to speak to you.

If you think God has told you something for another person, pray about, check it against the list and tell the person you "sense" God has spoken to you, encouraging them to pray for themselves to discern which words are from God and which are not.

Doing all these things will cover you in case you don't get it right, because you are human and will make mistakes. But checking it against the list will always ensure that whatever you say is said in love and given with encouragement whether they are words directly from God or from the goodness of your heart.

# How to Hear God's Voice

## Check List

1. Is what you've heard **ENCOURAGING**? God is a God of love and will never speak words of discouragement. His words will always bring people closer to Him.
2. Is what you've heard in the **BIBLE**? God will never go against what is written in the Bible, which is His word written down for us – these words will never change.
3. Has what you heard been **CONFIRMED** in a different way? When God speaks, He sometimes tells us the same thing in different ways to help us be confident that He really is speaking.
4. Have you **SHARED** it with a trusted Christian who has more experience hearing God's voice? If you talk about what you've heard with someone else, they will be able to help you understand if it's God's voice or your own.
5. Do you feel **PEACEFUL**? Sometimes, if we feel unsure, it's because we haven't quite heard right, or it could be that God hasn't finished speaking and there's more to come, so wait until you're certain before acting on what you hear.

### Nervous???

It's not always easy to speak out what you think God has told you for fear you'll get it wrong. But don't let that stop you if you believe God has spoken. Instead, write down what you've heard on paper, or in a text message or email, so that God's words of love and encouragement can be shared with those who need to hear it most.