

Upstream

STUDENT BOOK

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intro

The world culture is a strong river raging against God's way and toward a great fall. It would be easy for us to simply float along, but God calls His people to go against the flow, choosing Christ-centered living in a self-centered world.

NOTES

THE POINT

Christ-centered living chooses trust in God, not in circumstances.

THINK

Describe a time when you felt stuck and struggled to move forward.

READ NUMBERS 13:26-30.

Who or what are we tempted to trust instead of God?

Why do we often focus on the difficulties as opposed to God's promises and blessings?

What do you notice about yourself that shows you're influenced by trends?

READ NUMBERS 14:6-10.

What are some fears that might keep us from trusting God's promises?

How does the world tempt Christians to question God?

READ NUMBERS 14:21-24.

How does God reward those who are faithful to Him?

How have you seen that God always keeps His promises?

LIVE IT OUT**CHRIST**

God has promised us many good things (as well as a few tough ones). Remembering God's promises helps us to understand His character and purposes, and allows us to relate more intimately with Him.

Write a few thoughts about how each of these verses impacts your relationship with Jesus.

- John 14:1-2:

- John 15:9-11:

- Romans 8:28:

- Hebrews 13:5:

- John 16:33:

COMMUNITY

One of the most powerful ways we're reminded of God's promises is through the fellowship and encouragement of other believers.

What promises have been particularly meaningful to you in your relationship with God? Share these with others!

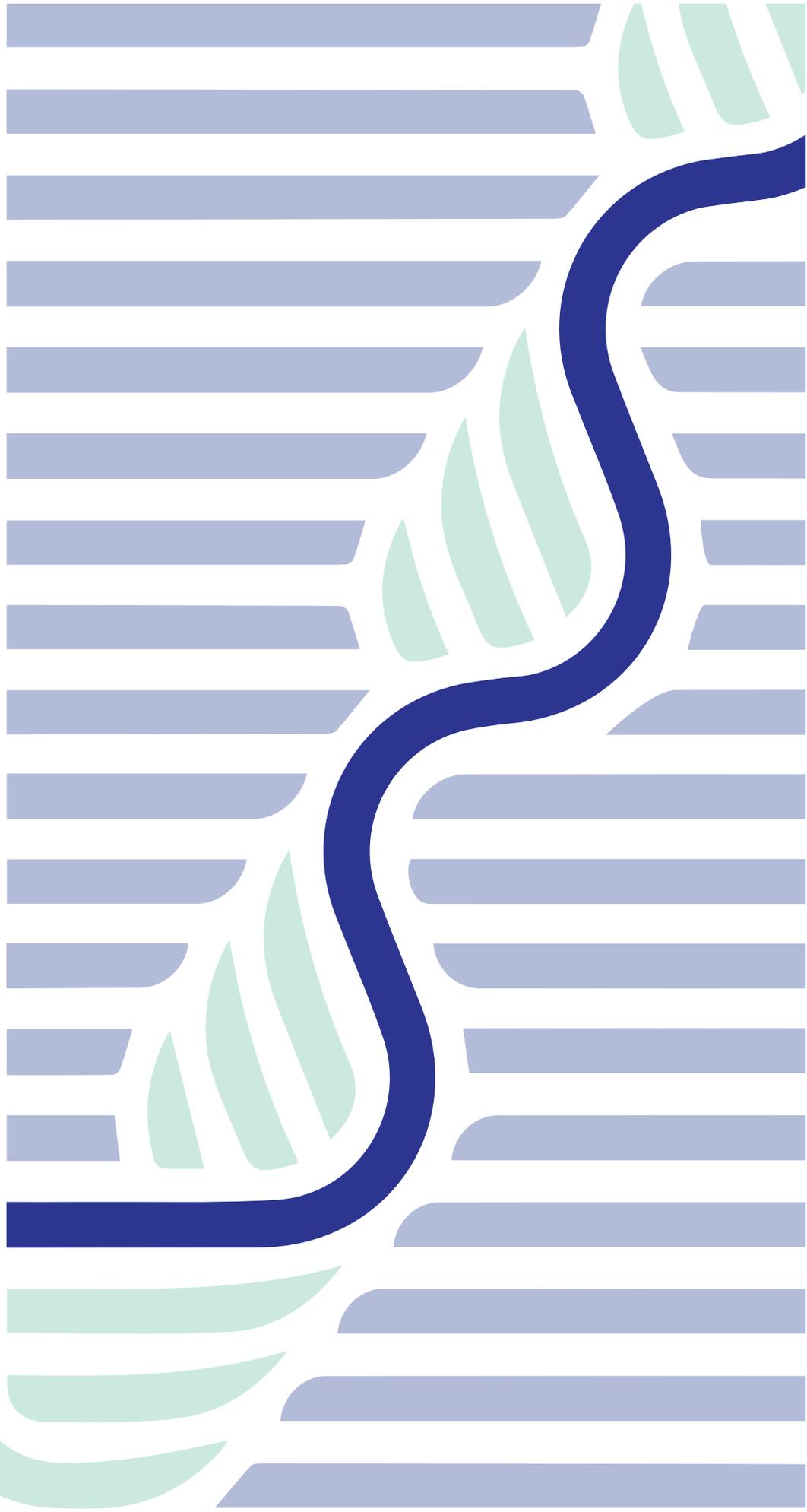
CULTURE

God has called His people to be in the world, but to live in a way that's very different from non-believers. Many of His promises are a great encouragement and comfort, because—admit it—living differently isn't always easy.

What is God calling you to do this week that will stand out from the cultural norm?

How will remembering this promise help you live by faith?

deivos



love + satisfaction

READ

**Do not love the world or the things in the world.
If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.
—1 John 2:15**

THINK

When a scribe came to Jesus, asking about the greatest commandment, Jesus responded that we must love God with all are, and second, we must love others as ourselves (Mark 12:28-31). That's the essence of the Christian life—love! The things we love give a clear picture of who we are. However, there are many people who would claim to be followers of Jesus, but an honest evaluation of their lives may tell a story that's different from their words. Worldly people love—they think about, spend their money, find satisfaction, and pursue—the things this world has to offer. However, people who are genuinely devoted to Jesus know that there's no real value in worldly things; therefore, they don't really care about them. Things such as cool clothes and fancy cars, popularity or incredible talent, book smarts or athletic ability—none of these mean much at all when we seek satisfaction in them.

When we devote ourselves to finding meaning or fulfillment in the things of the world, we'll ultimately find we come up empty. However, when we pursue Jesus as the source of all good in our lives, He'll teach us to use our possessions and abilities, not for ourselves, but to serve others and ultimately to point people to Him. This is John's word for the church—authentic believers don't love the world; they love Jesus!

Where are you tempted to pursue satisfaction apart from Jesus?

How can you use the things God has given you for His glory?