

THE WRITERS' BLOC

SEASONS *of* CREATIVITY

guided workbook



You're in the right place if...

YOU FEAR:

- + sharing your heartfelt words with others
- + being rejected
- + the opinions of others
- + not being good enough

YOU FEEL:

- + imposter syndrome
- + lack of confidence or assurance
- + not sure you can start something new
- + stretched too thin
- + rushed or behind

YOU NEED:

- + to understand your season and what that means for your art
- + permission to rest
- + time off
- + motivation to get started/keep going
- + courage
- + a plan

YOU PRAY:

- + to glorify the Lord
- + bless others
- + to grow in the art & heart of writing
- + to start or launch a career or hobby
- + to be used by God

You're not alone



To be a creative (by any measure) is to be vulnerable.

It means you have to take risks, put yourself 'out there' and trust that even when you don't see the reward, God can (and is) using you.

So often we get paralyzed by internal and external pressures that hinder our creativity.

You might even call it...writer's block. :)

But understanding your own creative seasons helps alleviate some of that pressure.

A creative season is a chunk of time, determined by you, that gives you the opportunity to look below the surface of what you are 'doing' and identify what you're 'feeling' or 'being.'

The more you understand your season, the more you can lean into it, and work with the grain, instead of against it.

Being creative takes work, practice, and discipline.

But it also requires rest, exploration, and time off.

This workbook has been designed to help you identify your creative season and nurture your soul while you're there.

Inside you'll find a seasonal devotion to **equip**, Scripture verses to **encourage**, and journal prompts to **engage**.

To everything, there is a season.

Even your creativity.

Enjoy!

Cara

Winter & Spring

To determine your creative season, look at the chart below to determine what season best represents the extent of your creative expression right now.

WINTER

Nurturing

Rest

Dormancy

Little to no productivity

Enjoyment of nature

Reflective

SPRING

Inspiring

New ideas taking shape

Lots of sketching,
note-taking

New signs of life

Trusting the process

Newfound energy

Summer & Autumn

To determine your creative season, look at the chart below to determine what season best represents the extent of your creative expression right now.

S U M M E R

Creating

Long days

Sustained productivity

Busyness

Insecurity

Lots of distractions

A U T U M N

Sharing

Unveiling new projects

Imposter syndrome

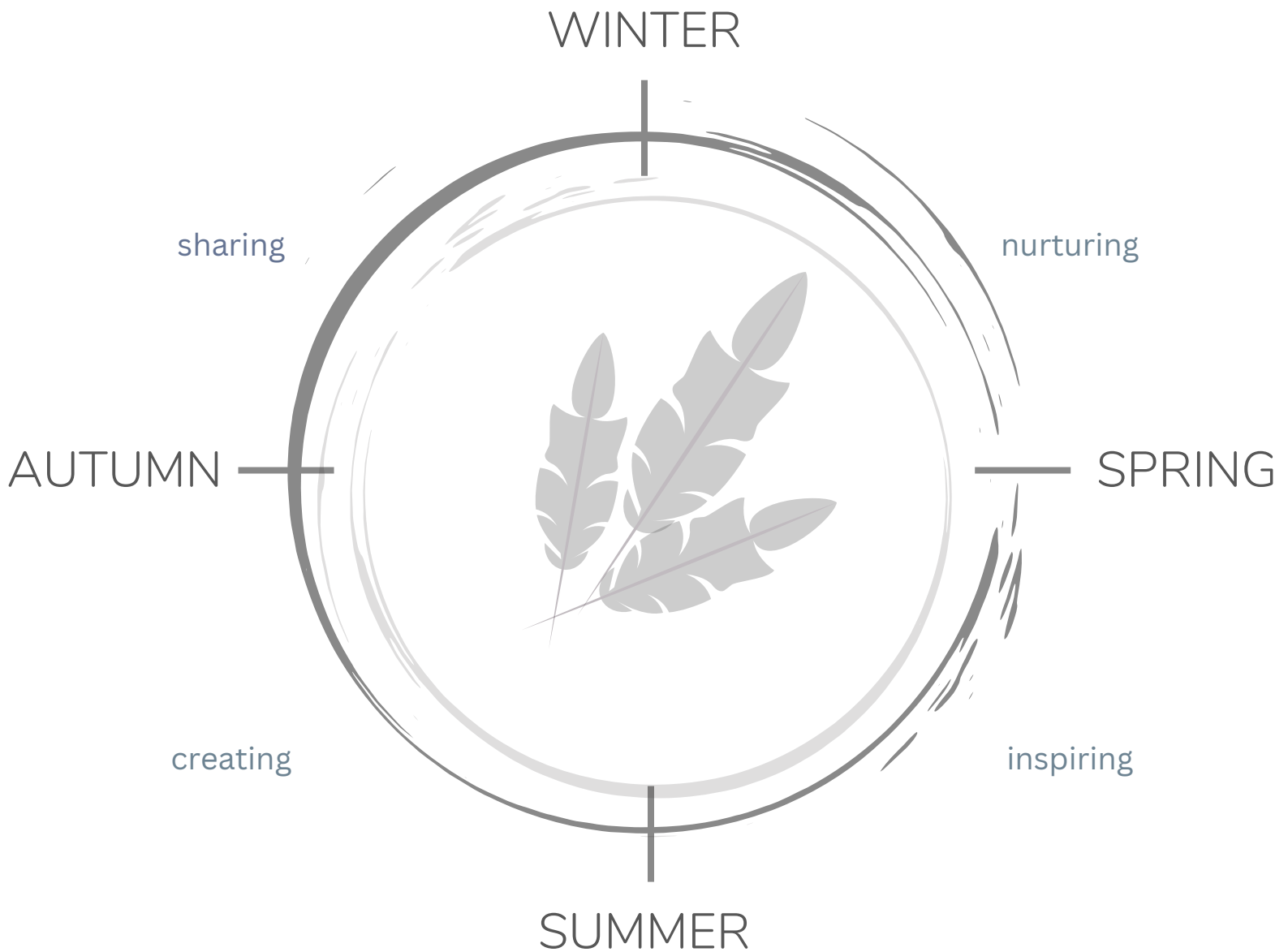
Recognizing the need to
slow down

Fear of external opinions

Lots of conversations

Four Creative Seasons

To everything, there is a season...



A vertical photograph of a winter scene. In the foreground and middle ground, there are numerous evergreen trees heavily laden with snow. The trees are dark green, contrasting with the white snow. The background shows a hazy, snow-covered mountain slope under a sky with soft, warm light, possibly from a low sun, creating a golden glow. The overall mood is serene and cold.

SEASON

WINTER

Our Frustration with Words

While visiting Point Lobos Natural Preserve in California, my family and I walked along seaside cliffs overlooking the ocean and saw colors, shapes, and textures that defied adjectives. From behind our phones and binoculars, the best words we could conjure up were “beautiful” “stunning” “majestic” and “unreal.”

As a writer, it frustrated me that I couldn't adequately express the beauty I saw. My frustration got me thinking about the power and limitation of words. Words are a writer's currency, and we seek to use them to make our readers experience something new or enlightening. When used properly we are using the very thing God used to reveal himself to us. Words!

God revealed himself to us in two ways; creation and the Word of God. Creation makes us stand in awe, and points us to a reality greater than ourselves, just like Point Lobos. Words can do the same thing.

The paradox of writing is that the very tools we use to point others to the infinite reality of God remind us that we are indeed, finite and limited.



We're pointing others to something that far exceeds our imaginations or limited vocabularies, and thus, we experience frustration. But maybe this is the point.

Maybe words should fail us when we stand on the seaside cliff because we're experiencing something bigger and greater than ourselves.

As Christian creatives, we long to convey the beauty we see in Creation and in God's Word. But because we're finite beings, bound by the limitations from the Fall, we must carry on, even if we do so imperfectly and with a great deal of frustration.

God created us to appreciate beauty. We crave more beauty because we were made for God, and God is beautiful. This is the reality we want others to see and feel with our words. No matter how frustrating that may be.



Do not neglect the gift you have,
which was given you by
prophecy when the council of
elders laid their hands on you. 1
Timothy 4:14

Now to him who is able to do far
more abundantly than all that we
ask or think, according to the
power at work within us,
Ephesians 3:20

But now, O Lord, you are our
Father; we are the clay, and you
are our potter; we are all the
work of your hand. Isa 64:8

Truths for the Winter Seasons

Blessed is the man who walks
not in the counsel of the wicked,
nor stands in the way of sinners,
nor sits in the seat of scoffers,
but his delight is in the law of the
Lord, and on his law, he
meditates day and night. He is
like a tree planted by streams of
water that yields its fruit in its
season, and its leaf does not
wither. In all that he does, he
prosper.

Psalm 1:1-3



Now to him who is able



Truths for Winter Seasons

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

Phil 4:8

So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy because on it God rested from all his work that he had done in creation. Gen 2:3

And he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, with intelligence, with knowledge, and with all craftsmanship. Exodus 35:31

But now, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Isa 64:8



Think about these things

FOR YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT

Reflect & Rehearse

Now's the time to mentally step back and reflect on how you've grown in the past season of your life, and rehearse how you'd like to continue growing into the next.

LOOKING BACK

What have I been learning
in this past season?

What has been working in
my creative process?

What hasn't been working?

What have I learned in my
walk with the Lord?

What can I celebrate from
this past season?

LOOKING FORWARD

What does my reader need
in this season?

How can I serve my reader
better?

What do I need for the
upcoming season?

What do I need to let go of?

In what directions do I
sense God leading me in my
writing?

FOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT



What have I learned?

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What have you
learned about
loving God?
How has he
shown his love
toward you?

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How have you
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In what ways
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A Time to Reflect



FOR YOUR ENGAGEMENT



SEASON

SPRING

The Framework for our Creativity

Michelangelo's David is one of the most famous works of art in the world. The massive 17-foot-tall Carrara marble statue depicts a youthful, but determined, David with a sling and stone ready to topple the giant Goliath. While you're surely familiar with the larger-than-life masterpiece, you might not be as familiar with the story of how Michelangelo received the commission to sculpt it.

Michelangelo was not the first artist chosen to sculpt the statue, but rather the fourth. The three previous artists, who had begun the work decades earlier, had either been fired from the project, given up or had died before the work was completed. The incomplete block of marble was relegated to the church junkyard and forgotten for 26 years.

In 1500, while taking an inventory of the cathedral workshop, the block was rediscovered, and the search to find an artist to complete it resumed. The marble was so badly damaged, no other artist (including Leonardo da Vinci) was interested in taking on the project. But Michelangelo saw a masterpiece waiting to emerge from the stone and accepted the challenge.



When asked how Michelangelo had made such an exquisite piece, he said, "I created a vision of David in my mind and simply carved away everything that was not David."

In Ephesians 2:10, Paul says, "We are God's workmanship." The Greek word for workmanship is 'poiema,' from which we get the word 'poem.' We are God's poem, his creative masterpiece.

In eternity past, the Master Artist took up the challenge to complete his masterpiece in your life. He saw your ruined life out in the junkyard and set his love upon you, chipping away at all the raw uncut material, until your new life in Christ started to emerge.

You have the high privilege of modeling his creativity when you accept the challenge to take up your tools. One day, the good work of your life and creative efforts will be complete. But until that day, he's making you into something spectacular, a poiema, a true masterpiece.



Truths for Spring Seasons

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 2 Cor 5:17

Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect. Romans 12:2

All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made. John 1:3

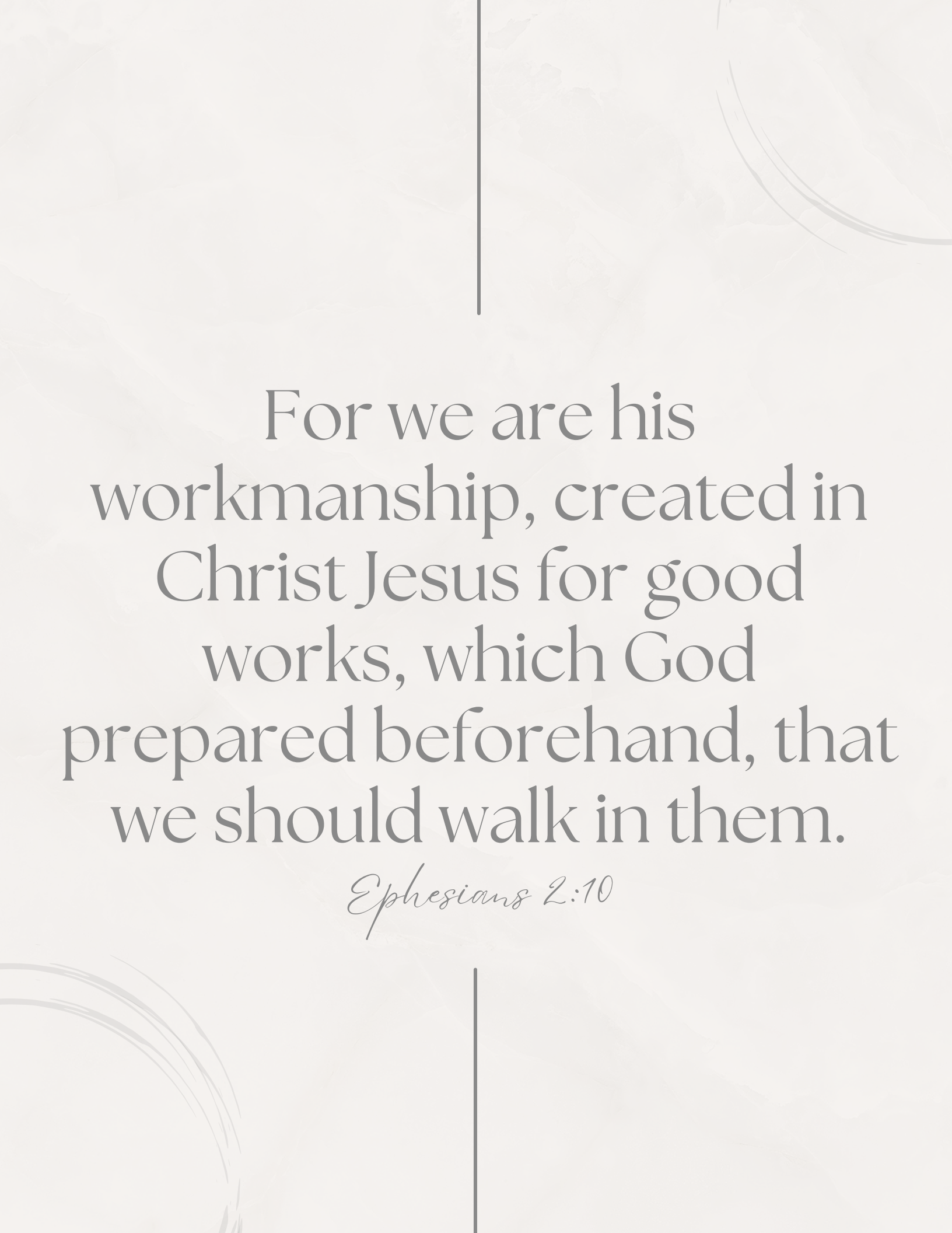
Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Psalm 51:10

I will sing a new song to you, O God; upon a ten-stringed harp I will play to you, Psalm 144:9

FOR YOUR ENCOURAGEMENT



You are a new creation



For we are his
workmanship, created in
Christ Jesus for good
works, which God
prepared beforehand, that
we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:10

Poiema

Greek word for Workmanship



PURPOSE

Your good works don't save you but they should overflow from your life. Take up your pen, your paintbrush, and your instrument, to create things that bless God and bless others.



OBSERVE

Our creativity hits a roadblock because we think that we must be 'original.' But there is nothing new under the sun. Since only God creates, our job is to observe, take notes, and gather inspiration.



IMAGINE

When you are inspired, consider the thinking behind the style. How can I change it to make it reflect me? What does the finished product look like in your mind's eye?



ESTABLISH

Establishing a regular routine for your creative endeavors is more important than having a lot of time. Inertia kills creativity. Staying in your established routines will lead to a steady flow of creativity.



MANIFESTO

Instead of writing what you know, write the things you want to read. This will fuel your creativity and keep you from getting bored.



ABSORB

God rested, and so you must too. Don't resist boredom, it leads to really great ideas. Learn to unplug and recharge. Talk walks. Get out into nature. Get some vitamin D. Be still.



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SEASON

SUMMER

The Fulfillment of our Creativity



As a young girl, I watched from my living room TV, as Lady Di walk down the aisle of St. Paul's Cathedral to marry Prince Charles. It seemed like the stuff of fairy tales. Decades later, I stood inside the same colossal nave and beheld the faraway place I had envisioned from my childhood.

Cathedrals were originally built to inspire, educate, and provide a magnificent place where people could meet with God. Many of the cathedrals we see today drew their inspiration from the first "official" meeting place between God and man, the gold-laden tent of meeting or the tabernacle.

After giving Moses the Ten Commandments and the Law, God wanted a tabernacle to be built, where he would meet and dwell with his people. God had chosen a man to do the work, and his name was Bezalel.

"Then Moses said to the Israelites, "See, the Lord has chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and he has filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills—

to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver, and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of artistic crafts" (Exodus 35:30-33).

This is the first mention of the Spirit being given to anyone in the Scripture. Isn't it remarkable that it was first given to a craftsman? The story of Bezalel reminds us that art and craftsmanship is an integral part of our worship. Even if we're not endowed with as much skill as Bezalel, we can still create and reflect our craft back to our Creator.

Someday the need for our artistic representations will disappear because we'll see the Son of Man face-to-face. Shadows and types will be unnecessary. But until that time, we should be busy filling the earth with art that reflects the beauty and glory of God. That is the highest aim of art, and this is our spiritual act of worship.



Truths for Summer Seasons

The house that I am to build will be great, for our God is greater than all gods. But who is able to build him a house, since heaven, even the highest heaven, cannot contain him? Who am I to build a house for him, except as a place to make offerings before him? So now send me a man skilled to work in gold, silver, bronze, and iron, and in purple, crimson, and blue fabrics, trained also in engraving, to be with the skilled workers who are with me in Judah and Jerusalem, whom David my father provided.

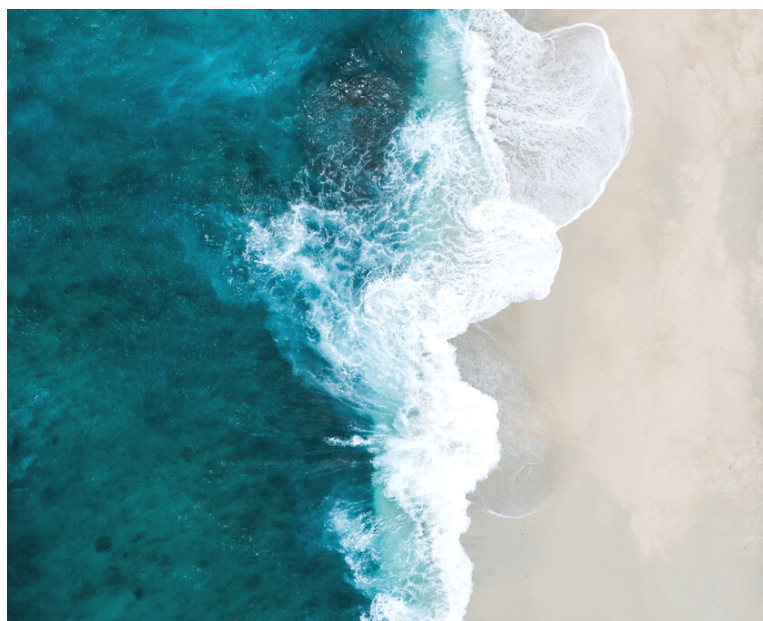
2 Chronicles 2:5-7

He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also, he has put eternity into man's heart, yet so that he cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

Ecc 3:11

You have an abundance of workmen: stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and all kinds of craftsmen without number, skilled in working gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Arise and work! The Lord be with you!"

1 Chronicles 22:15-16



He has made all things beautiful



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AUTUMN

Overcoming Fear in Creating



Have you ever considered that writing is a form of personal expression that's similar to getting a tattoo? In the same way, tattoos tell the world something about what one values, so do the words we share. Both are art forms that bear something of our souls and require we roll up our sleeves and be brave. Here are some practical ways to express yourself and be brave!

1. **Get inspired.** In order to teach, share, or inform, you first have to be a student. Observe the world around you, take notes, take pictures, and read books.
2. **Practice, practice, practice!** Write every day. It's nearly impossible to not get better when you put in your time.
3. **Don't be boring.** Grab your reader's attention in the first sentence. Does this sentence make me want to read the next sentence, and then the next?
4. **Be a ruthless editor.** Consider each word in a sentence. Is it necessary? If you can say it in 8 words instead of 10, say it in 8.
5. **Read it out loud.** Don't publish until you've read your piece out loud at least 2 or 3 times without stumbling.
6. **Read it backward.** Read the last paragraph first, and then the second to last, until you get to the beginning. Does it still make sense?
7. **Stop comparing.** Keep your eyes on Jesus, and don't worry about what someone else is doing. Mind your own business, and follow the path Jesus has made for you.
8. **It's ok to be a nobody.** John the Baptist said of Jesus, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Focus on loving God and loving others and let the Lord decide on our fruitfulness.
9. **Recognize your seasons.** Some seasons of life lend themselves to more time to pursue writing than others, and others require time to rest.
10. **Take time to refill.** We can't give what we don't have. Input is as important as the output.



Truths for Autumn Seasons

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Col 3:15-17

“Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will, they existed and were created.”

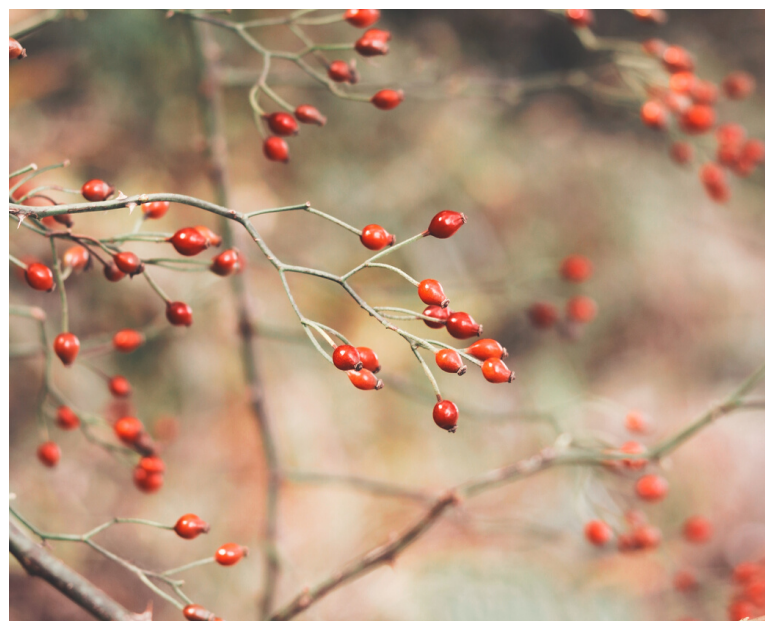
Rev 4:11

Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.

Col 3:23-24

Giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Eph 5:20



Giving thanks always



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Thank you!

I hope this workbook has helped you identify your creative seasons, and that you've been equipped and encouraged as you've engaged with this material.

We hope that you'll lean into your creative season, and find even more encouragement inside our online community the Writer's Bloc.

It's there you'll find a like-minded community that will encourage the heart & art of the creative process.



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