

**THE ZOMBIE  
APOCALYPSE  
SURVIVAL  
GUIDE  
FOR  
TEENAGERS**

**JONATHAN McKEE**

# **The Zombie Apocalypse Survival Guide for Teenagers**

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# CONTENTS

ENDORSEMENTS	8
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	10
WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM THIS GUIDE	12
FOUR YEARS AGO THURSDAY	15
HEADPHONES LEAD TO HEADSTONES	17
WHY PROVERBS IS MORE RELEVANT THAN EVER BEFORE	22
KNOW YOUR ENEMY	26
CELEBRATE BIRTHDAYS . . . THEY MIGHT BE YOUR LAST	31
DOGS TRULY ARE YOUR BEST FRIEND	37
LIFE WITHOUT TACO BELL	42
BOOKS ARE THE NEW TV	47
LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR . . . AS LONG AS HE HAS A PULSE	52
INHERENTLY EVIL	58
THE SMOKER	66
I PROMISE	70
THE ISLAND	79
WHILE THEY SLEEP	83
THE SPRING	90
DON'T MISTAKE YOUR BROTHER FOR A STRAY	96
CLIMBING	101
JOY RIDE	107
CRYING IS BETTER THAN DYING	113
ENJOY THAT DRINK . . . IT WILL BE YOUR LAST	122
LITTLE CABIN IN THE SNOW	127
SAYING THANKS	136
RELATIONSHIPS FIRST	143
TOUGH CHOICES	149
EVERYTHING I NEED IS AT WAL-MART	159
KNOW YOUR WEAKNESSES	167
THE HANSON INN	173
UTOPIA	183



# ENDORSEMENTS

“Great strategies to outlast the zombies (who are coming), and apply ancient truths to obstacles we continue to face everyday.”

—**Ralph Winter, Hollywood Producer** (*X-Men, Planet of the Apes, Lost, X-Men Origins: Wolverine, and dozens more*)

“*The Zombie Apocalypse Survival Guide for Teenagers* is awesome! Actually, it’s brilliant. Part “The Walking Dead” and part survival journal, it is guaranteed to grab the attention of even the most jaded and bored teen, surreptitiously guiding them to think about life’s most important issues. Want your kids to consider life from a biblical perspective? Give them this—it’s that good!”

—**Rick Johnson, bestselling author of *That’s My Son, and Better Dads Stronger Sons***

“Jonathan’s creative new *Zombie Apocalypse Survival Guide for Teenagers* is exactly the type of devotional teenagers will actually read. This resourceful little tool provides a captivating fictional story about three teenagers surviving against the odds, cleverly interjecting 27 sets of questions that drive young people to think deeply about decision-making, their morals, and truth from God’s word. In a fun, interesting way, Jonathan helps teens tackle tough issues like coping with pain and depression, drinking, loving difficult people, and the temptation to indulge in fleshly desires. The teenage guys in my small group will be blown away that there’s a Christian author who uses the popular post-apocalyptic fictional premise to address their real-life issues--I’m looking forward to hear their response.”

—**Doug Fields, Author, Speaker**

“The most original student devotional I’ve ever read.”

—**Josh Griffin, LoveGodLoveStudents.com**



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And finally, a huge thanks to Marko and Adam for believing in this project, not being scared of the word *zombie*, and taking the leap with me to make it happen when so many others were scared of the ramifications.



# WHAT YOU SHOULD EXPECT FROM THIS GUIDE

Zombies, strays, eaters, uglies . . . what are they called? It depends on who you ask. After all, it's not like there'd been some global communications effort to label them.

Fast, slow, lethal, clumsy . . . which are they? All of the above. Don't be too quick to make assumptions about them—it could cost you.

This isn't a normal book. It's not even a typical zombie survival guide. It's the story of three teenagers who endured and survived against the odds, adapting where many adults failed. To be honest, not many teenagers survived *The Havoc* either—probably because most of them didn't acclimate and learn like these three did.

For one thing, they didn't carry much in their packs: a crowbar, a pair of bolt cutters, a Bible and a few paperback books, a homemade grill made from a shopping cart, and a few other cherished items.

Does the fact that they carried a Bible surprise you? It was about the only thing that made sense after the rest of the world dissolved into chaos. And it served as a trustworthy guide when they were faced with some difficult choices—much like the choices you face today (but without any zombies, hopefully).

So what was the secret to their survival?

Good question. The answer lies in the following pages copied from Chris's journal . . . one of the few who survived.





# **THE SURVIVAL GUIDE**

# FOUR YEARS AGO

## THURSDAY

It's been almost four years since "The Havoc." That's what we call the zombie uprising. Although few use the word "zombie." We just refer to them as "strays."

It was the week of March 18, 2019. I remember the date because it was my 14th birthday. *Happy Birthday, Chris! Your dead neighbor is tearing through your fence and trying to eat your schnauzer!*

Most people were killed within the first month. And those of us who survived were now "learners." We noticed and adapted. In other words, it was basically just the intelligent people who remained. I'm just keeping it real when I say that. Most of the guys who bullied me in junior high are now corpses roaming around South Sacramento. (I know this for a fact because I dodged one of them when I was driving a Mazda that we hot-wired a couple of years ago. Somehow I resisted the temptation to put the car in reverse and back over him.)

After a couple months, shortly after the power grid went dark, my little brother Cody started keeping a calendar. I followed his lead and recorded key events, writing them on a stack of Applebee's placemats we'd found. That stack is now a journal of sorts.

Survival hasn't been easy for the three of us—Cody, Chelle (a girl who joined up with us two years ago), and me. Chelle lost her family and had no one. Cody and I shared some food with her, and days turned into weeks, which turned into years. We care for her like a sister now . . . but a cool sister, not the kind that hogs the bathroom.

It's surprising how many teenagers *didn't* make it. I figured they'd be better survivors than that—they were young, strong, and in better physical shape than most adults. But the majority of them died within the first month—not because of a lack of strength or endurance . . . more often it was because they were careless and irresponsible.

Somehow, the three of us survived.

And after the two-year mark, we began sharing our stories and some survival tips with people we met on the road. Not a lot of groups like ours have made it. I guess our little “family” is sort of an anomaly because we're alive and we still like each other.

A year ago now, David, my friend and fellow survivor, told me he really appreciated the survival tips we shared with him, and he suggested that I keep writing them down. Since then, I've been more diligent about recording what we've learned and documenting our story of surviving the last four years. I've used 60 placemats so far, and I've got only seven left. What follows is the story of our journey.

This coming Thursday it'll be four years.

*Happy Birthday, Chris! You're still alive!*

# HEADPHONES LEAD TO HEADSTONES

Before The Havoc started, teenagers commonly wore headphones. Undeniably, those were the first to become snacks for some wandering corpse.

Back during the first month of chaos, when we still had electricity, some teenagers kept wearing their headphones to get their Rihanna or Maroon 5 fixes. It didn't take long before one of those strays would walk right up behind them and . . . well . . . game over.

That almost happened to our friend Jake out by the Arden Fair Mall. Jake had those awesome Beats™ by Dre headphones with sweet bass. He and his buddies got up one morning and went from store to store, looking for food. This was when the stores still had a few canned goods sitting on random shelves. Jake was listening to some Kanye while he perused the aisles of an abandoned Target, so he didn't even notice that stray wandering around in the sporting goods department.

Jake's friend Mike was the first to spot the corpse from across the store. He started yelling for Jake, but Jake was lost in his music, nodding his head to the beat as he reached to the back of a shelf for a can of condensed milk. The stray headed right for Jake—it was one of the faster ones!

So Mike grabbed a cricket bat from sporting goods and sprinted toward Jake. The stray was almost within arm's reach of Jake when Mike embedded the bat into its jaw.

Needless to say, Jake doesn't like Kanye's music anymore. He actually gave up on wearing headphones altogether.

It's this simple: Your ears are one of your greatest defenses. Don't mess with your hearing. *Ever!*

Before all of this craziness started, my dad never liked earbuds or headphones of any kind. I never really understood his frustration. He thought headphones were nice to wear on airplanes or buses, but he didn't like it when we wore them around the house or at school. He called it "antisocial" and said, "Headphones just further the divide between teenagers and adults."

He was pretty adamant about it.

One day, Dad came home with two big boxes from Costco. "Chris! Cody! Here you go!" He'd bought each of us a big docking station for our iPods. It had big speakers and a remote.

"Play them as loud as you want. Just no headphones," he said.

I didn't really care. Speakers . . . headphones . . . it made no difference to me. Plus, it was a really cool docking station.

Looking back, I can see what Dad was doing. He liked the docking station because he could hear what we were listening to. That was a pretty smart move for a parent because some of my friends listened to some pretty bad stuff. Plus, with these new docking stations, we didn't block out the rest of the family with our headphones.

I kind of understand my dad's logic. My friend Sam always wore headphones. And it didn't matter where we were—at his house, the mall, or a football game—Sam always had music pumping in his ears. Whenever I tried talking to him, he'd pull one of the earpieces back and grunt, "Huh?"

So frustrating.

I like me some music, but come on.

It's funny how in this new world, teenage isolation is no longer a problem. Kids aren't alone in their rooms pumping music into their heads; instead, groups of people, like our little "family," gather together in the same room for safety and have actual conversations.

I guess that's something we can appreciate about this new world. It makes me wonder if my dad was right all along.

I miss my dad.

So if you should ever stumble across an iPod with a trickle of power left in it, think twice about putting on those headphones. Because today in this world, headphones lead to headstones.

# JOURNAL ENTRY #1

## Something to Think About

### *Back to Reality . . .*

- Chris talked about teenagers' love for music. Name a few of the songs that you listen to the most.
- What's your favorite playlist (assuming that you have playlists)?
- Why do you think some young people prefer wearing headphones to playing music out loud through a docking station or on a stereo? Which do you prefer?
- What do you think about Chris's dad's statement: "Headphones just further the divide between teenagers and adults"?
- Name something you do that might "further the divide" between you and your family.
- In the new world, people don't isolate themselves but gather together and have conversations. What would it look like if families in our society today regularly gathered together for conversation?

## THE BIBLE PROVIDES SOME GOOD WISDOM:

*"Run from anything that stimulates youthful lusts. Instead, pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts."* (2 Timothy 2:22, NLT)

- What does this verse tell us to run from, and what are we supposed to pursue instead? How can we do these two things?
- Do young people ever put something in their ears that "stimulates youthful lusts" today? Give an example.

- What does this verse tell us to enjoy?
- How can you make an effort this week to meet with Christian friends or family?

## **SOMETHING I CAN DO THIS WEEK:**

Think of some family or friends who are an encouragement to you in your faith. Take a minute right now to make plans to hang out with these people sometime this week. Open up a dialogue with them about what it might look like to “pursue righteous living, faithfulness, love, and peace” in your world.

# WHY PROVERBS IS MORE RELEVANT THAN EVER BEFORE

About five years ago, just a few weeks before I turned 13, my dad shared a verse from the first chapter of the book of Proverbs:

*“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”* (Proverbs 1:7, NIV)

I gotta be honest. Sometimes when my dad shared verses with me, it was boring. But for some reason, I can still remember this conversation like it was yesterday. We talked about wisdom, and we discussed examples of how we could make wise choices that week.

I walked away from that conversation with good intentions of seeking out God’s wisdom.

And then I turned 13.

I don’t think the word *wisdom* would accurately describe the way I acted as a teenager. Once I ate a whole cup of kitty litter—*on a dare!* I thought it would impress my friends. It just landed me in the emergency room.

At that age, *wisdom* wasn’t really in my vocabulary. The words *impulsive* or *shortsighted* are probably better descriptions of that stage of my life.

That is, until the dead started walking the earth.

It's amazing how life-or-death situations tend to change everything. Now when we read the wisdom in the book of Proverbs, the words have a renewed meaning. Chelle probably wouldn't be with us if it weren't for that book.

A little over two years ago, Cody and I had a bad experience with a girl named Lindsey. We met her by the Delta, and she convinced us that she was hungry and needed our help. So we shared our food and let her stay by our campfire that night. When we woke up the next morning, Lindsey (if that was even her real name) was gone, along with Cody's backpack and my bow and arrow.

We were so angry with ourselves for being fooled and getting ripped off. Cody and I argued all day about what we should do the *next* time we encounter someone who seems nice and helpless. Cody swore he'd never trust another person on the road. I maintained that we should give the person a chance but guard our supplies more carefully. We never did resolve the issue that night. We were probably too angry to think straight.

Three nights later, Cody and I read these words in Proverbs 2:

*“For the LORD grants wisdom!  
From his mouth come knowledge and understanding.  
He grants a treasure of common sense to the honest.  
He is a shield to those who walk with integrity.  
He guards the paths of the just  
and protects those who are faithful to him.*

*Then you will understand what is right, just,  
and fair, and you will find the right way to go.  
For wisdom will enter your heart,  
and knowledge will fill you with joy.  
Wise choices will watch over you.  
Understanding will keep you safe.”* (Proverbs 2:6-11, NLT)

The next morning while we were hunting duck, we met Chelle out on the levee by the old airport. She was famished and alone. Her clothes were tattered, and her long blonde hair was dirty and pulled back into a ponytail. I remember saying a quick prayer, “Okay, God, you said you grant us wisdom. Help Cody and me make the right choice here. Help us to do what is ‘right, just, and fair.’”

Suddenly, Proverbs 25:21 popped into my head:

*“If your enemies are hungry, give them food to eat.  
If they are thirsty, give them water to drink.”*

So we shared some duck with Chelle . . . and the rest is history.

I’m so glad we gave Chelle a chance despite our bad experience with Lindsey. In a world full of strays, wisdom is the difference between survival and death. Wisdom is morality in a world where laws no longer govern.

Proverbs gives us guidance that is more useful than ever before. Rarely does a day pass when we aren’t forced to make a decision that has consequences, good or bad, for everyone in our group. It’s good to know these decisions aren’t being made based on selfishness or some quick moment of fun. Our decisions are grounded in justice and righteousness that comes from a truth we hold close to our hearts.

I’m 18 now and the three of us read a portion of the book of Proverbs almost every night.

## JOURNAL ENTRY #2

### Something to Think About

#### *Back to Reality . . .*

- Chris confessed something he did on a dare that was really foolish. What's the most foolish thing you've done to impress someone?
- Chris claims the words *impulsive* or *shortsighted* are probably better descriptions of teenagers. Do you agree or disagree? Why?
- When life became dangerous for Chris and his group, they all became more interested in wisdom. Why?
- The author of Proverbs writes, "The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge." What does that mean? And what does "fearing God" actually look like?
- The author of Proverbs explains that when we pursue God and the wisdom that flows from him, we'll understand what is right, just, and fair. Give an example of what this might look like in your life.

### **SOMETHING I CAN DO THIS WEEK:**

Write out a specific example of something you can do to pursue godly wisdom. If it's a task, set a reminder in your cell phone or write it on your calendar. Once you've done it, talk with a friend or family member about what you learned from the experience. Set a time to do it again. Make it a habit.