

A Guide on Getting to Know God

by Mary Lowman



A Guide on Getting to Know God

A Bible Study

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A Ministry for Christians in the Workplace

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*Now this is eternal life, that they may know you,
the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

John 17:3

I believe that getting to know God should be the central focus in the life of every believer. I pray this guide will help many discover the great excitement of continually discovering God.

WELCOME!

I'm delighted that you've shown an interest in getting to know God, because it is without question the most important thing any person can ever do. God said, *You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart*, (Jeremiah 29:13). So, if you are truly seeking with all your heart to know God, you can be assured you will find him. He has promised that you will.

What I have discovered is that many Christians want to know God better and are willing to make the commitment, but they lack a method or a structure to help them do it. And because they don't really know how to get to know God, they become discouraged with the effort and the results of their ineffective methods.

Therefore, I began a few years ago to share my simple method with a few people here and there, and discovered that it was very helpful to them. Then, someone asked if they could print my outline and hand it out. And I discovered, as I distributed these outlines, that people responded to them very positively. Then I developed a message on the subject, and again the response was strong. Finally, when I aired it on our radio program, we had the largest response we've ever had to a single message. That convinced me that there must be many others who need help. Hence, this study guide is now a further resource to help people get to know God.

I want to be sure you understand that this is not the only method; it is mine and it works well for me, though I continually look for ways to improve it. If you haven't found a method that works for you, I encourage you to try this one.

You're in for excitement as you discover the joy that comes from knowing God better and better all the time.

Joyfully,

Mary Lowman

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Study Objective and Format

Before you jump into the study, I think it will be helpful to give you a brief explanation of how I've designed this workbook. The course is interactive to get you involved as much as possible. This approach will help you discover things for yourself and come to some conclusions on your own.

All quotations and passages are quoted from NIV. While it's possible to use other translations, you'll find it easier to follow if you use the NIV.

Another characteristic of this study is that it asks questions about you and gives you opportunities to make decisions.

The format gives you space to answer questions and write in your thoughts. I encourage you to do this, even though it may not seem necessary. I have learned that putting things in writing really crystalizes those ideas in my mind, especially when God is dealing with me. It will also help you to concentrate better.

I will also challenge you to memorize some passages. It's one of the most effective ways to grow in your knowledge of God.

Lesson 1 – The Meaning & Importance of Knowing God

Introduction

You set your alarm at night with very good intentions to spend some time with the Lord before hurrying off to your busy day. You want to be a victorious Christian, and you know that a consistent time of daily devotions is essential. It seems, however, to be a difficult habit for you to establish, but you're going to try again.

Somehow that alarm goes off much earlier than you expected, and after delaying the inevitable for ten minutes, you crawl out of bed and start the day. In a few moments you find your Bible and sit down to have your devotions.

Now, where will you begin? Guess you could start to read the Bible through, but those Old Testament books are sometimes difficult to understand. Or you could use the “open Bible” method—when you open the Bible and read whatever you find. Well, your time is running short, so you decide to read a Psalm. Now, a quick prayer before you finish.

“Dear Lord,” you begin, “thanks for this day and all your blessings. Please bless me today and my family...” and you try to pray. It seems you can't get too far without your thoughts wandering on you. You think of what you've got to do that day, you feel yourself getting sleepy, and you struggle to get through your prayer. After a few moments of blessing everyone who comes to your mind, you look at the clock and realize you'd better get moving or you're going to be late.

Daily devotions—wow, they just don't seem to work for you. You know you should, you try, but it just never materializes. It seems like such a drudgery, and you end up feeling guilty.

Does that scenario ring a bell with you? Sound like something you've experienced? Well, I don't know of any Christian who hasn't struggled with establishing a meaningful consistent devotional life, but I'm quite sure that there never has been a truly godly life—a life of blessing and service to God—that did not have it. It's essential and yet for many Christians—perhaps most—it seems like a real duty instead of a great privilege.

This study is about what has traditionally been called daily devotions or daily quiet time. I think the terms, somehow, have taken on negative connotations. I can relate to how I felt about it at one time. It was a duty, I felt guilty for not doing it, but I couldn't seem to motivate myself to be consistent in any way.

Do you have any negative feelings about daily devotions or a daily quiet time?

☐ Yes

☐ No

If your answer is yes, can you describe how you developed those negative feelings?

I think it might be helpful to refer to this daily time as a time to get to know God. It should certainly be a devotional time and a quiet time, but the purpose is to get to know God better. The Psalmist said, *Be still, and know that I am God* (Psalm 46:10). The purpose of this study is to help us learn how to be still, and therefore how to know God.

What does it mean to know God?

What am I talking about when I refer to getting to know God? Nothing mysterious. Exactly what I mean if I said I wanted to get to know you better.

The better you know someone, the better you know:

- what they think about different subjects
- how they react to different situations
- what they're like—their personality traits
- their past, their history, their background

You've heard couples who've been married for many years say that they know what their partner is thinking without asking him or her. If you have children, you probably know just how they're going to react in a situation before it ever happens! Why? Because you've spent so much time with them, gone through so many experiences with them, observed them so often, that you know them inside out.

Well, God in his great mercy has made it possible for us to know him. Because of Jesus, we can know his viewpoint on any subject. We can know what he's done in the past, and that tells us how he will be in the future. We can intimately know his nature, what he's like.

My friends, if you will just think about that for a few moments, your mind will probably blow a few fuses, because it's almost more than we can comprehend. To think that the God of all the universe will allow us to know him!

To know God means that we become increasingly aware of who he is, how he thinks, what he would tell us to do in any situation. To know God means to see the world through his eyes, to have his perspective of what's happening.

The Importance of Knowing God

I will make two assumptions based on the fact that you are taking this study:

1. You think it is important for a Christian to pursue knowing God in a daily, consistent manner.
2. You feel you could use some help in improving your method of getting to know God.

If that's true, then you're on the right track. I remind you that any person who sets out to know God will never be disappointed, because God has promised that we will find him when we seek him with our whole heart (Jeremiah 29:13).

Read the following verses and then paraphrase what they teach us about the importance of getting to know God.

Exodus 33:13

John 17:3

Ephesians 3:16-19

Philippians 3:10

2 Thessalonians 1:8-9

2 Timothy 1:12

Who Can Know God?

Now we need to answer another basic question about knowing God: who can know God?

Look at 1 Corinthians 2:10-14.

This passage tells us that the things of God are _____ discerned.

What Spirit is required within us in order to discern the things of God?

Without this Spirit, how do people perceive the things of God?

Read Romans 8:9.

This verse further tells us that if anyone does not have the Spirit of _____, he does not belong to Christ.

(Note: The Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God are the same Spirit.)

Therefore, only people who have the Spirit of _____ within them can know God.

Read Ephesians 1:13-14.

If we must have the Spirit of God within us to be able to know God, how does a person receive the Spirit of God?

By _____ and _____ the Word of Truth, the gospel of salvation.

After hearing and believing the gospel, the Holy Spirit becomes a _____ guaranteeing our inheritance until our redemption. What does this mean to you?

Are You Qualified to Know God?

We've now seen from Scripture the importance of getting to know God and who can get to know him. Here's a most important question: are you qualified to get to know God?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ I'm not sure

If your answer is yes, what qualifies you?

If your answer is no or you're not sure, you can settle that issue and become qualified right at this moment. By receiving Jesus Christ as your Savior you can know that God's Spirit dwells within you. This is the most critical question you face in life. Don't hesitate to settle it right now.

Why does it seem so difficult to get to know God?

I believe Scripture is clear that getting to know God is the most important thing we can ever do. Yet it seems many Christians never really pursue a daily quest for God. I heard of a survey which said that the average Christian spends less than five minutes per day in prayer and Bible study. Let's see if we can understand better why it's so difficult and why so few Christians have a daily time with God.

Who is the enemy of every true Christian?

Do you think our enemy wants us to get to know God in an ever-increasing measure?

☐ Yes

☐ No

What kinds of things might our enemy do to keep us from getting to know God better?

Think of what it takes to build any relationship:

1. Desire
2. Commitment
3. Time
4. Possible schedule changes
5. Knowledge of how to communicate and develop a relationship

Just as these things are required to build a relationship with another person, so they are required to build a relationship with God. Our knowledge of God will depend on how much we are willing to do the things required to build the relationship.

Which of these five areas do you think gives most Christians the most difficulty?

Which one gives you the most difficulty?

This study is designed to help you with number 5—to know how to communicate with God and develop an ever-growing relationship with him. The other four areas cannot be taught; they are dependent upon your attitude and your will.

The Level of Commitment Required to Know God

Let me once again refer you to Jeremiah 29:13:

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.

If you are seeking with all your heart, then you will have the desire you need, you'll be more than willing to make the commitment, you'll set aside the time, rearrange your schedule wherever necessary, change your priorities when needed, and you'll find a method that works for you.

What will happen if a person is seeking with half-a-heart or three-quarters of a heart?

God is looking for whole-hearted seekers, and anything less will miss the mark.

Stop now and consider:

☐ Yes ☐ No Am I searching for God with all my heart?

☐ Yes ☐ No Am I willing to make the commitment required in order to develop this ever growing relationship with God?

☐ Yes ☐ No Am I willing to discipline myself and make the necessary time available?

☐ Yes ☐ No Will I rearrange my schedule and priorities if necessary?

☐ Yes ☐ No Will I develop and use a method that facilitates the process of getting to know God?

How I hope your honest answer to those questions is yes. There's no doubt we pay a price to develop this relationship with God, but the returns on this investment are so huge our human math is inadequate to express them! If you will make this commitment to know God with all your heart, you are opening the door to the greatest adventure you'll ever know. Imagine—knowing the eternal God!

Read Psalm 42:1-2.

This is a beautiful description of a man who wanted to know God. Most of us are probably not too familiar with deer, but if you've ever had a dog, you know how they pant for water, especially on a hot day. Their tongues hang out and their mouths gape open—waiting to get to their water dish. You can imagine that the deer in the mountains don't stray too far from their water source, for they pant for that water. King David uses this illustration from nature to describe how he desires to know God. No wonder he was called a *man after God's own heart*.

Perhaps it would be good for each of us to make a covenant with God or confirm one we've already made.



I covenant with God:

That I will seek him with my whole heart. I recognize this will require a high level of commitment from me. I am prepared to make that commitment because I understand that knowing God is by far the most important thing I can ever do.

Signed _____



When is the best time to get to know God?

One practical issue that arises when we start considering a daily time with God is, when will we find time to spend with him?

Read Psalm 90:14. What time of day is mentioned here, and what are the benefits?

Here are two other passages which mention this same time of day:

Psalm 5:3

Psalm 143:8

When did Jesus usually find time to be alone with God? See Luke 6:12.

What was Daniel's schedule for being with God? See Daniel 6:10.

Read Proverbs 3:9. What does *firstfruits* mean to you?

Do you believe that time is valuable?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

If time is a part of your assets and your wealth, how does Proverbs 3:9 relate to your time?

If you have concluded that we should give God the best part of our time, not the leftovers, then you need to think about what time of day is your firstfruit time. I believe that the morning hours, before our day begins, is by far the best time of day for most of us. We're at our freshest. Giving God the first part of our day helps us to get the right perspective on the day ahead of us. It prepares us for whatever we have to face during that day. It programs our minds to think the right thoughts throughout the day.

I have met a few people who use evening hours. I can think of one person who says because she is a night person, the evening hours are better for her. Others have work schedules that start very early, and they find the evening better.

Personally, I wouldn't let the fact that I'm a night person keep me from a morning time with God. The benefits derived by starting your day with God are enormous. You need to get your mind and your emotions under his control before you face your day. And it's so easy for other things to upset the schedule later in the day.

But I would say that this is an individual decision and there's no one right answer. Whatever time you choose, it must be a conscious decision on your part. I strongly recommend that

you designate the exact time frame, and not leave it open or dependent on your schedule. If you don't, believe me your schedule will eat up your time with God almost every time.

I still have to put this into practice. Sometimes I'm on a very tight schedule, and it's very tempting to take my daily quiet time and use it for writing or preparing messages. I could easily rationalize by saying I'm doing something for God, so what's the problem. But writing is not a substitute for my personal time with God each day. So, the alarm goes off earlier, and I give up sleep time, but not time with God. Once you start allowing your schedule to shorten or interrupt your time with God, it becomes an easy down-hill slide!

How much time should be set aside for getting to know God each day?

I can't answer that question for anyone except myself, so you will have to answer for yourself. Nor do I believe that what I do is necessarily what everyone should do. I have more control over my time than a great many of you do. With that luxury and freedom, I feel I am more responsible for a significant time commitment than, say, a working mom who rarely has a moment to herself.

The guiding principle is that to whom much is given, much is required. We all have the same number of hours in a day, but for some of us there are more discretionary hours than for others.

However, before you make a decision about the amount of time, let's ask a few more probing questions:

1. How much time each day do you spend watching television or streaming movies?
2. How much time each day do you spend on social media?
3. How much time each day do you spend reading other materials, i.e., magazines, books, etc.?
4. How much time do you spend on yourself each day: grooming, relaxing, "doing your thing", hobbies, games, sports, etc.?

5. How many hours of sleep do you normally get each night?

While there may be nothing wrong with the things we've listed, would you agree that spending time with God is more important than any of them?

☐ Yes

☐ No

(Be careful, I'm leading you on!)

Would you agree that as a rule you should spend more time each day getting to know God than you do in any of these areas (with the exception of sleep time)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

Would you be willing to give up some of your sleep time if that were necessary to have enough time with God each day?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Not sure

What time will you designate each day to get to know God?

Now we need to nail down our commitment to a specific time frame each day. I want to challenge you to think big! Don't be stingy with this time. Getting to know God requires significant time.

We're frequently challenged to commit a portion of our income to God, and if you're like me, your time is even more valuable than your income! I think we sometimes hoard our time more than we do our money. God may want you to take a step of faith here and make a time commitment that seems difficult for you. You can commit your time by faith just as you do money. Time is a resource given to us by God and we will one day be accountable to him for the manner in which we use it. Look again at your answers to the questions on the previous pages—and decide what time you will commit to God each day.



I will commit to spending the following time getting to know God each day:

From _____ am/pm to _____ am/pm. I make this commitment by faith, trusting God to give me the strength I need

to fight the enemy of my soul and my own lack of discipline. By His grace I shall succeed.

Signed _____



Conclusion

Well, you're on your way. If you've set that time aside, and you really mean to follow through, the hard part is behind you!

Be warned of this: many things will start to happen to try to destroy or interrupt this time you've set aside. Maybe you've decided to get up early before other family members rise. Don't be surprised if someone else in the family gets up at the same time, though they've never done it before! Some of you will have sudden job pressures and workloads that demand extra time, and you'll be tempted to forego the time with God. You may discover that it's so much harder to wake up each morning than it used to be. Sleep may overtake you more easily than before.

You can count on some obstacles being thrown in your path now that you've made a commitment. I've never seen it to fail. Just remember, that's the enemy of your soul trying to discourage you and keep you from establishing this wonderful new habit. He knows if you get serious about getting to know God, he's in trouble, and he doesn't give up without a fight. Just be prepared, and be resolute in your commitment, regardless of his tactics.

Suggested Assignment

1. Start your time commitment with God right away.
2. Memorize Psalm 90:14: *Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.*
3. Read *The Pursuit of God* by A. W. Tozer.

Lesson 2 – Listening to God Through His Word

Introduction

In our first lesson we talked about what it means to know God and why it is important for us to know him. We got to the point where we made a decision about the amount of time each day we will set aside to get to know God. Even though you haven't finished this study, I hope you have begun to honor that time commitment. If you did, you're already getting a taste of the good things in store for you.

Someone conducted a study which shows that it takes 21 days to make a new habit or break an old one—21 consecutive days. What that tells us is that new habits take some time to establish, but once we hang in there long enough, they become part of our routine. We can apply that to our time each day with God. You've had to change some schedules, perhaps, change your routine, sleep a little less, whatever. Change is always difficult, but I encourage you to stick with it for the 21 days, and then it will be well established in your life.

Learning to Listen to God

One of the most important parts of getting to know someone is to listen to what they say. If we're going to know God, we have to learn to listen to him.

Read Hebrews 1:1-2 and describe how God spoke to our forefathers:

and how he speaks to us now:

Why do you think it is no longer necessary for God to speak to us in the unusual ways he spoke to Abraham, Isaac, and Moses, to mention a few?

God's final word came through Jesus Christ, who was the Word of God incarnate, as we read in John 1. Therefore the words of Jesus are God's words to us.

Second Timothy 3:16 gives further indication of how God speaks to us.

We see that all _____ is God-breathed.

What does that mean to you?

If God breathed his very breath and truth into the words of Scripture, can we not then look to that written Word to learn to know God better?

Romans 15:4 is further testimony of the confidence we can place in God's Word. Fill in the missing blanks:

For _____ that was written in the past was written to _____ us, so that
through endurance and the encouragement of the _____ we might have hope.

Psalm 119 is a beautiful testimony to the power and all-sufficiency of the Word of God in the life of a believer. It is the longest Psalm, and with only a couple of exceptions, every verse refers to God's Word in some way. Look at these verses in Psalm 119, and see what the Word of God can do for us:

Verses 2 & 3: _____

Verse 9: _____

Verse 11: _____

Verse 99: _____

Verse 105: _____

Verse 165: _____

Let me tell you that if you have not already fallen in love with the Word of God, that will undoubtedly be one of the results of your quest to know God. Job said, *I have treasured the words of his mouth more than my daily bread* (Job 23:12). That will happen to you, too, the more you get into this incredible Book. It will be more important to you than food. You won't be able to imagine a day without it. Your Bible will be marked and frayed at the edges, but you'll hang on to it long after you should have bought a new one because it has become so familiar and dear. Just look at what you've written on the previous page. This is what you can expect God's Word to do for you and in you as you get to know God better by listening to his blessed written Word.

Reading the Word of God

We've seen how important it is for us to allow God to speak to us through his written Word. Now, let's consider a methodology for doing that. In the introduction to Lesson 1, I talked about the open Bible method—just opening the Bible and reading whatever appears before your eyes! Well, that's like going to the kitchen cupboard, closing your eyes and grabbing something to eat. While it may be better than nothing at all, your diet will not be very well-balanced, and probably not that tasty!

There are many good ways to systematically read the Word of God. I'm going to give you three suggestions, and indicate the method I use and why. But the important thing is that you find a method which suits you.

Method #1:

Choose one book (or portion of a larger book) and read that entire book every day for one month. For instance, the book of Ephesians has six chapters and could easily be read in one

sitting. If you read Ephesians every day for one month, you'd really be familiar with the truth in that book. It would be indelibly entered into your mind.

I think this is an excellent thing to do, but I would also combine it with other readings in the Bible to have a balanced diet. For instance, read the book of Ephesians every day along with a chapter in one of the Gospels and a chapter or two from the Old Testament.

Method #2:

Read the Bible through from beginning to end in one year. Many people do this, and it's certainly a good idea. You can get published guides as to how much to read each day in order to cover it in one year. I have included one of these guides in the back of this study. I like this one because it gives you a balanced diet of Old and New Testaments each day.

Method #3:

On a daily basis:

Read one chapter from a Gospel

- Start in Matthew, go through John and start again in Matthew.

Read one chapter from the remainder of the New Testament

- Start in Acts, go through Revelation and start again in Acts.

Read one Psalm

- Start at Psalm 1, go through Psalm 150 and start over again.

Read one chapter from Proverbs

- There are 31 chapters, so it's easy to match the chapter with the day of the month.

Read two other Old Testament chapters

- Start at Genesis and go through Job, then start again in Genesis.
- Start in Ecclesiastes and go through Malachi, then start again in Ecclesiastes.

This is the method I use. I like it because it keeps me going through the entire Bible, but it also keeps me focused on the words and life of Jesus at all times, as well as the praise nature of the Psalms and the practical, everyday guidelines I gain from Proverbs.

I keep a card in my Bible that lists the last chapter read, so I'll know where to start each day. Currently I'm reading in Mark and 1 John from the New Testament, Leviticus and Isaiah from the Old Testament, as well as a Psalm and Proverb chapter each day.

Choose from these, combine them into one of your own, or come up with your own unique plan. The important thing is to read a good portion every day, to make sure it is a balanced diet from all parts of the Scripture, to keep track and be consistent. **But most of all, read it!**

Meditating on the Word of God

How would you define meditation?

How often do you meditate—on anything?

☐ Frequently

☐ Occasionally

☐ Seldom

Meditation is in ill-repute in some Christian circles these days, with all the Eastern religions focusing on it as though through sheer meditation one can find life's answers. While we certainly do not ascribe to that philosophy of meditation, we surely need to learn the art of meditating on the Word of God. We live in a society where quiet thinking is often considered a waste of time. For me, it is a continual re-training of my mind to learn that time spent in quiet thoughts about God's Word is profitable time. Here are some ideas to help you develop the art of meditating on the Word of God.

As you read, if you're like most of us, there will be times that your concentration factor will be zero! When I catch myself reading but not knowing what I've read, I make myself go back and re-read that portion. Then I say to myself, "What did you read? What does it mean? What does it say to you?" This facilitates the meditation process—causes me to re-think and reconsider what I've just read.

Another good method to help develop a meditative reading style is to focus on your state of mind before you begin to read. One thing that works well for me is to tell myself to read today as though I've never heard or read this before in my whole life, it's all new to me, and I'm reading it for the first time. We often need fresh eyesight as we read God's Word to keep from reading things into it that are not there, or missing things that are there. This helps me very much to read Scripture in a meditative state of mind.

When I'm reading the Gospels, I try to put myself in the shoes of the people in the story. I often think, "How would I have reacted if I'd been there when Jesus did that or said that?" As you start to read your chapter in the Gospels, say to yourself, "Put yourself in their place. You are one of the crowd (or one of the disciples, or the blind man, or one of the Pharisees), and

this Jesus has just burst on your world. If you heard these words for the first time right from the Man himself, what would you think, what would you do?"

So much of what Jesus did and said is absolutely phenomenal, and we need to capture and keep that wonder and awe at his power and his words. Again, this works really well for me. I always look forward to the Gospels, because Jesus is so exciting and revolutionary. And I never read without seeing something I've never seen before.

Another good idea is to stop in the middle of a passage and pray about it, as it speaks to your heart. Ask yourself, "Do you really believe this is the truth? If you do, how does it affect you?"

And occasionally some passage speaks to me so powerfully that I read no further for the day. Rather, I sit and think and write, and consider what impact this message is to have on my life.

It's possible to spend a lot of time reading the Word without really benefitting from it. This is not a ritual we do to please God; this is our daily feeding time, when we gain nourishment to get us through the day. Therefore, we must read those words with an air of expectancy, looking for the truth God would speak to our hearts that day.

Can you think of some practical things you can do to help you meditate as you read God's Word?

Certainly one key element is the location. Where is the best place you can go to have this quiet time?

Here are some ideas that others have found helpful as a quiet spot for meditation:

- Go to work early and use the quiet office
- In the car
- In the basement or garage

For me, I have a spot in my house that has become my quiet time spot. All my books are there, and it represents meditation to me. In fact, I rarely sit on that chair at any other time. I thought I was a little crazy until I read that Spurgeon, the great English preacher, did the same thing! I have also used airplanes, hotel lobbies, and other unlikely spots, as the occasion demanded!

Praying Scripture as You Read

A few years ago our pastor taught us the power of praying scripture back as we read it, and I want to pass this on to you. It will enhance both your understanding of scripture and make it even more powerful in your life.

The best way to do this is to give you an illustration. Let's use Psalm 130:

You read:

Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord; O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

You pray:

Lord, I feel like I'm in the depths today, and I cry to you. I thank you that your ears are attentive to my cry.

You read:

If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.

You pray:

I am so grateful that you have not kept a record of my sins, Lord. I thank you for your forgiveness.

You read:

I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope. My soul waits for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning, more than watchmen wait for the morning.

You pray:

Lord, help me to wait for you. I find this so hard to do sometimes. Please teach me how to wait for you and not run ahead of you.

You read:

O Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption. He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

You pray:

I do put my hope in you, Lord. I thank you that you love me no matter what. I praise you for the redemption I have in Jesus.

And then a New Testament example, from 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18:

You read:

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

You pray:

*Please help me today, Lord, to be joyful. May I not complain or grumble about anything.
Give me a thankful heart, no matter what happens today. I want to do your will.*

I encourage you to incorporate this into your Bible reading and meditation time. I have found it to be greatly enriching and helpful.

Keep a Record of Communication with God

Some people call it *journaling* others call it a *spiritual notebook*. Whatever you want to call it, I *strongly* encourage you to keep a record as you read God's Word and it speaks to you.

Again, there are as many different ways to do this as there are people, I'm sure. Some people write in their journals every day, paraphrasing what Scripture said to them that day. I don't necessarily write every day but rather at those times when something in Scripture has a particularly special meaning or new understanding for me. I personally don't impose a strict rule in that regard, but I do write in my journal very frequently.

Why keep a record? Lots of good reasons:

1. Helps you remember what God said to you through his Word.
2. Helps you concentrate more as you read.
3. The journal becomes a treasure house to you as it tracks your own spiritual growth.
4. The journal becomes a great encouragement to you, as you remember how God spoke to you in times past.
5. You'll forget many things God says to you if you don't take time to write them down.

Read Psalm 105:5-6 and Psalm 143:5.

These verses encourage us to _____ what God has done for us.

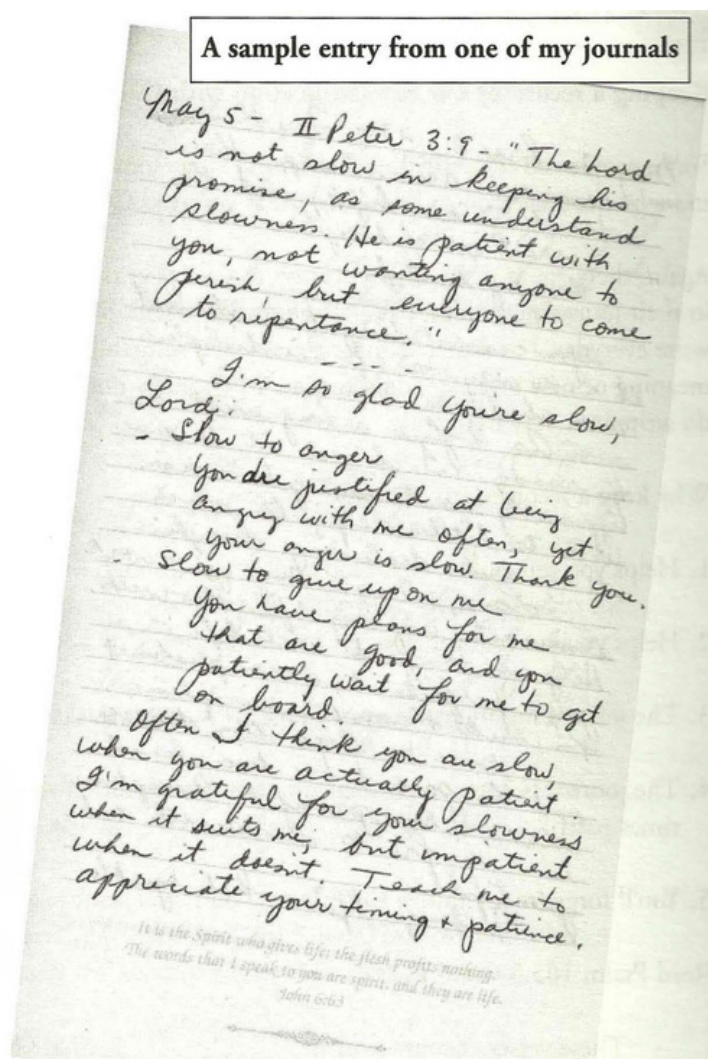
Keeping a record is a great way to facilitate your memory and thereby to obey God by remembering what he has done.

I wouldn't take anything for my journals, which I've kept for over forty years now. I frequently refer to them for encouragement, for ideas to use in messages, and to remind myself of all that God has done for me in the past.

What kind of journal should you use? It really doesn't matter. My good friend uses spiral notebooks. I use the cloth covered blank books you can find at any bookstore. The only thing that is important, I think, is that it be bound in some way to keep from losing the pages or getting them jumbled.

What should you write? Just write from your heart in your style. Remember, no one reads this except you (unless you allow them to). You don't have to worry about your writing style, your spelling, your punctuation. No English teacher will come along to grade it! This is a book of encouragement for you. It doesn't have to be long, it doesn't have to be clever. But I believe it is most important to keep a record of what has transpired in your heart as you've read God's Word.

In order to give you some idea, I have copied one page from one of my journals here. (You'll see that I could have made a good doctor with my handwriting!) Sometimes it's helpful just to see how someone else does it, but I'm sure you'll develop your own style. I write mine as a letter to the Lord.



The purpose of your daily time in the Word of God is to give you nourishment each day. Many of you, like me, still have to spend time preparing Sunday School lessons or devotional messages of some sort. But I encourage you to keep this time as your feeding time, separate from your study time. Let me quote something that George Muller wrote on this:

I began therefore to meditate on the New Testament from the beginning, early in the morning. The first thing I did, after having asked in a few words the Lord's blessing upon his precious Word, was to begin to meditate on the Word of God, searching as it were every verse to get a blessing out of it, not for the sake of the public ministry of the Word, not for the sake of preaching upon what I had meditated upon, but for obtaining food for my own soul.

(If you're not familiar with George Muller, I strongly encourage you to read one of his biographies. He was a man of great faith and much prayer.)

Conclusion

It would be helpful if you make a decision regarding the method you will begin to use as you explore God's Word daily. Perhaps you have one that's working for you now. Good! I always say, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it!" But if it can be improved or you're starting from scratch, then you need to choose your method. You can try a few out if you like, but the important thing is to have a balanced diet, and to read five or six chapters a day, more if possible.

What method do you think will work best for you?

Suggested Assignment

1. Decide which method you will use, and GET STARTED!
2. Memorize Psalm 119:11: *I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.*
3. Read Psalm 119 at least twice this week.
4. Purchase your notebook for your spiritual journal.

Lesson 3 – Prayer Journal

Section 1: Praising God

Review

Before we begin Lesson 3, a quick review of our first two lessons might be a good idea.

1. Why is it important for us to know God?
2. Who is eligible to get to know God?
3. If we're going to know God, how must we seek for him?
4. How does God speak to us today?
5. Can you quote Psalm 90:14? Psalm 119:11? It is helpful to write them out.

Keeping a Prayer Journal

Before we get into Lesson 3, I think it will be best if we talk first about a prayer journal, since I will be referring to it. I want to encourage you to develop a prayer journal, along with your spiritual journal, which we discussed in our last lesson. They could be one and the same, but I have found it convenient to separate them.

What is the purpose of a prayer journal?

- To help structure your praise and prayer time so that you don't forget the many prayer needs and praise items.
- To keep record of answered prayer.
- To give you help in praying, especially on those days when you don't want to pray.
- To help you pray with purpose and eliminate shallow praying.
- To generate new enthusiasm and excitement for prayer.

A small notebook, a spiral book—anything that is convenient can be used for a prayer journal. Again, I recommend some type of binding rather than loose leaf, which gets lost too easily.

How is it structured?

I will share my structure with you, just to give you some ideas. As I began to develop my prayer time years ago, I began by scribbling notes in the back of my journal. Soon I ran out of space, and started a separate notebook. It has evolved and I'm sure will continue to change as I learn more about prayer.

Since Jesus is the master teacher, his prayer instructions are the most important ones. The model he gave us for prayer is the best. You'll find it in Matthew 6 and Luke 11. We call it *The Lord's Prayer*, but really it is *The Disciples' Prayer*. It is the format he gave to his disciples when they asked him to teach them how to pray.

Briefly, *The Lord's Prayer* teaches us that prayer should contain:

Praise and Adoration

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name

Commitment

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Petition

Give us today our daily bread.

Repentance and Forgiveness

Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one (Matthew 6:9-13).

My Prayer Journal is divided into four sections; based on the Lord's Prayer:

Section 1 Praise and Thanksgiving

Section 2 Confession and Dedication

Section 3 Intercession

Section 4 Prayer Requests and Answers

We'll cover these sections as we go through the study.

Introduction

Today's lesson covers the subject of praising God. Praise is something that God has ordained for us to do. The following verses are just a small sample of the many in God's Word which exhort us to praise God.

Read: Psalm 150:1, Psalm 22:23, Psalm 33:1

Praise is the occupation of heaven. This is what is going on now in heaven, and it's what we'll be doing when we get to heaven.

Read: Revelation 4:8, Revelation 5:11-12, Revelation 19:6

Describe in your own words the praise scene that is presented in these verses:

More is said about praise in the Bible than about prayer. Praise is more important to God than petition. But do you think most people spend more time praising God or petitioning him?

Why should we praise God?

God needs to be told how wonderful he is.

☐ True ☐ False

God has a large ego and likes to have it fed.

☐ True ☐ False

Praise is the ritual required to get God to do good things for us.

☐ True ☐ False

Obviously, all those answers are not true. We do not praise God for his benefit, but for our own benefit. Let's try some more True/False questions:

Praise transforms us into God-centered rather than self-centered people.

☐ True ☐ False

Praise is the spark plug of faith, it helps dispel our doubts.

☐ True ☐ False

Praise helps us develop a positive mental attitude, and that can bring healing to us emotionally, mentally, even physically.

☐ True ☐ False

A steady diet of praise from our lips to God will dispel many undesirable things in our lives, such as complaining, bad moods, an unforgiving spirit, sulking, depression, lack of motivation.

☐ True ☐ False

And just as obviously, all those answers are true.

But the more you get to know God, the more you will praise him just because he is worthy, just because your heart is overflowing with thankfulness, just because you long to tell him what he means to you.

How Do We Praise God?

When I praise God each day, it takes two forms:

1. Praising him for who he is and what he has done
2. Thanking him for his particular blessings in my own life

Let's look at the first one: praising God for who he is.

I'm sure you're aware that the Bible clearly teaches that God is a *triune God*. There are three distinct persons that are revealed to us as *one God*. This is a great mystery which truly is incomprehensible to the human mind. But by faith we accept that God exists in three persons. Who are the three persons of the *Trinity*?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Each of these three persons of the Godhead plays a distinct and important role in our lives. We need to know what the roles are. It is a subject on which volumes and volumes have been written, but for our purposes we'll cover it quickly.

God the Father

Read the following verses and then describe how we relate to God the Father.

Isaiah 64:8 God is our _____.

Matthew 6:1 God will give us our _____.

Matthew 7:11 God will give us _____.

1 John 1:3 We can have _____ with the Father.

Our praise should incorporate these wonderful aspects of God the Father. In addition, we need to praise him for his attributes. Here are a few verses that give us a partial listing of God's attributes:

Psalms 99:9 God is _____.

Isaiah 30:18 God is _____, _____, _____.

Deuteronomy 32:3-4 God is _____, _____, _____, _____.

James 5:11 God is full of _____ and _____.

Mark 10:18 God is _____.

Acts 10:34 God does not show _____.

1 John 4:8 God is _____.

Psalms 93:1 God is robed in _____ and _____.

Following are some passages which tell us how God feels about us as individuals:

Psalms 139:1 God _____ me.

Psalms 139:3 God is _____ with all my _____.

Psalms 139:16 God has written all my _____ in his _____ before they ever happened.

Matthew 10:30 God knows the number of _____ on my _____.

John 3:16 God _____ me enough to send his Son to die.

Hebrews 13:5 God will never _____ us or _____ us.

These are some of the things I have listed in my prayer journal in the praise section. As I read the Word and I see more things about God, I add them to the list. Then during my praise time each morning I use the list to remind me of all the attributes of God for which I should praise him.

What benefits would you be likely to derive from spending time each day reciting the marvelous attributes of God and reminding yourself of how God feels about you personally?

God the Son

Read the following verses and describe how we relate to God the Son.

1 John 4:14 Jesus is our _____.

John 15:15 Jesus is our _____.

Matthew 12:50 Jesus is our _____.

Hebrews 4:14 Jesus is our _____.

Hebrews 7:25 Jesus is our _____.

We need to remember our incredible relationship with Jesus Christ, and praise him each day for who he is. Here are a few more verses which show characteristics about Jesus and what he has done for us. These should also be on our praise list.

Philippians 2:6-8 Jesus became a _____ for us, and was obedient to _____ for us.

Hebrews 13:8 Jesus is always the _____.

John 14:3 Jesus will _____ for us.

Romans 8:38-39 Nothing can _____ us from the love of God in _____

Romans 8:34 Jesus _____ for us to the Father.

I encourage you to continually look for the attributes and works of Jesus to add to this list. Has not your heart been blessed just to look up these verses and see just how much Jesus has done and continues to do for each believer? And each day as you reconsider and praise him again for all his goodness, it will lift your heart in a very special way.

God the Holy Spirit

Read the following verses and describe how we relate to God the Holy Spirit.

John 14:26 The Holy Spirit _____ us all things and _____ us of what Jesus has said.

1 Corinthians 6:19 The Holy Spirit lives in _____.

Romans 5:5 The Holy Spirit pours _____ into our heart.

Here are more verses which tell us what the Holy Spirit does for us.

John 16:13 The Holy Spirit _____ us into _____.

Romans 8:26 The Holy Spirit _____ us in our _____.

Romans 8:27 The Holy Spirit _____ for the saints.

John 16:7-8 The Holy Spirit _____ us of sin.

Acts 1:8 The Holy Spirit gives us _____.

When you stop and realize all that the Holy Spirit does for you, it truly is encouraging. Even as I've written this study, I've seen some things I hadn't thought of before, and added them to my list in my prayer journal.

After I structured my praise time in this way, I read what an old saint of God, William Law, wrote many years before I ever thought of this.

The words are antiquated but the truth is eternal. Here is the excerpt:

“When you begin your petitions, use such various expressions of the attributes of God, as may make you most sensible of the greatness and power of the Divine nature.

For those representations of the Divine attributes, which show us in some degree the majesty and greatness of God, are an excellent means of raising our hearts into lively acts of worship and adoration...

For such representations, which describe so many characteristics of our Saviour's nature and power, are not only proper acts of adoration, but will, if they are repeated with any attention, fill our hearts with the highest fervor of true devotion.”

Notice he says that reminding ourselves of God's divine attributes will lift our hearts “into lively acts of worship and adoration.” This is a proven way to praise God effectively.

This should give you a good start to your praise section. It's a partial list, but I wouldn't want to steal the joy you'll find in discovering these praise items for yourself. Your list will grow the more you read the Bible.

The second part of the praise section is: thanking God for his particular blessings in my own life. Praise focuses on the person of the triune God, who he is, what he does. Thanksgiving focuses on the specific blessings in our own lives.

Why should we be thankful?

The question may seem unnecessary, but let's nail it down by looking at 1 Thessalonians 5:16-17. Fill in the missing blanks.

Be _____ always; _____ continually; give _____ In _____
_____, for this is _____ for you in Christ Jesus.

What do you think it means to give thanks in all circumstances?

Read Ephesians 5:19-20 and fill in the missing blanks.

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, _____ giving _____ to God the Father for _____, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Based on these Scriptures, which of the following things should we give thanks for?

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| ☐ Our blessings | ☐ Our trials |
| ☐ Our unfulfilled desires | ☐ Our triumphs |
| ☐ Our pleasant circumstances | ☐ Our weaknesses |
| ☐ Our unpleasant circumstances | ☐ Our strengths |

Everything means everything! Thanksgiving is not dependent upon our feelings or our circumstances. It is rather a decision on our part to obey—to be thankful in our circumstances, to be thankful for all things and in all things. Why? Because it is the will of God for us. One of the great questions many Christians ponder is, “What is God's will for me?” Well, one thing we know—it is God's will for you and me to be thankful at all times.

I frequently encourage people to make a list of what they have to be thankful for, especially when they're in the midst of depression or hard times. Remembering all the good things in your life is a very positive way to allow God to start working in your life.

Make a list of all that you have to be thankful for.

Things for which I am thankful:

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

I strongly recommend entering this list in your prayer journal and adding to it regularly.

Conclusion

Well, you can see that praise will occupy a good percentage of your time as you get to know God. That's just exactly the way it should be. Don't short-change this part of your time with God each day. Even if you sacrifice time spent on petitions, it's more important for us to praise God than anything else we can do. As you start to recite these attributes of God and to daily remember who he is and what he has done for you, you're going to develop a closer and closer relationship with the living God.

Another good idea to incorporate into your praise time is to use good hymns and songs to lift your heart in praise. Ephesians 5:19 says to sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, and it's a very good way to get your praise time going. I keep a hymnal handy. There are many wonderful praise choruses which you can use. And you don't have to be a great singer. God loves our joyful noises!

The more you praise him in the morning, the more your day will be filled with joy and peace. The more you learn about the Triune God, the more you'll be able to trust him and the more you'll turn to him all day long.

Truly this praise time will change your life.

Suggested Assignment

1. Get a prayer journal started. Buy some sort of notebook and divide it into the sections you want to use. (I use tabs at each section to make it easier, leaving blank pages in each section so that I have room to add and expand. Remember, this prayer journal will be constantly growing and changing as you grow in the knowledge of God.)
2. Memorize Psalm 34:1: *I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.*
3. Spend time each day praising God, using the lists you've started in this lesson to remind you of his praise-worthiness.

Lesson 4 – Prayer Journal

Section 2: Confession and Dedication

Review

A few review questions before we get into Lesson 4.

1. Why is it important for us to praise God?
2. Name two things about each person of the triune God for which we should praise them individually:

God the Father:

1. _____

2. _____

God the Son:

1. _____

2. _____

God the Holy Spirit:

1. _____

2. _____

3. Can you quote Psalm 90:14; Psalm 119:11; Psalm 34:1?

Introduction

We covered Bible reading and meditation in Lesson 2. In Lesson 3, we discussed the importance of a prayer journal, and I gave you my suggestions for how it should be organized, following the format of the Lord's Prayer:

Section 1 Praise and Thanksgiving Section 3 Intercession

Section 2 Confession and Dedication Section 4 Prayer Requests and Answers

This lesson covers Section 2: Confession and Dedication.

Why pray?

Let's start with a basic question, why do we pray?

To inform God of our needs so that he'll know what to do.

☐ True ☐ False

To beg God to do things for us.

☐ True ☐ False

To appease God so he won't do bad things to us.

☐ True ☐ False

Just in case you had any difficulty with those statements, read the following verses.

Matthew 6:8 God does not need to be informed of our needs. He knows _____ we ask.

Matthew 7:9-11 God is our _____, and he wants to give us _____ gifts.

Isaiah 30:18 God _____ to be _____ to us.

Jeremiah 29:11 God has plans to _____ us, not to _____ us. He plans to give us _____ and a _____.

No, prayer is not an exercise we do to impress, inform or influence God. But God has ordained prayer as the way he unleashes his blessing and power on us. If you want to see that in the Bible, read Matthew 7:7-8.

Jesus said if we _____, we receive; if we _____, we find; if we _____, the doors will open for us.

God is looking for askers and seekers and knockers. And when we go to him in prayer with this asking/seeking/knocking attitude, things will start to happen for us. Prayer is the door that unlocks the blessings God has stored up for us in heaven. I think there are many unclaimed, unasked, unsought blessings which have never been bestowed because so many people failed to ask or seek or knock.

What is Confession?

I usually begin my prayer time with praise so that I become more God-focused and less self-focused. Then before I go any further, I want to make certain that there's nothing in my heart and life which is displeasing to God. And this is called confession.

Confession is:

- Clearing the air between you and God.
- Facing up to your weaknesses.
- Asking forgiveness for specific transgressions which occurred since your last prayer time, or which have just come to your attention.
- Acknowledging your inadequacies and total dependence on God.

Read Psalm 51.

Whose confession is this? _____

What sin prompted this confession? _____

There are lessons we can learn about confession by analyzing David's confession:

Verse 3 - What does this tell us about the state of mind of a Christian who knows his or her need of confession but has not yet made confession?

Verse 4 – Who do you always sin against?

Verse 7 - When God cleanses you, how clean are you?

Verse 11 - What happens to your close fellowship with God when you have unconfessed sin in your life?

Verse 12 - What happens to your attitude when you have unconfessed sin?

Verses 13-15 - Three results of confession are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

This should give you some idea of just how important honest confession is if you are to really get to know God. It cannot be overlooked or ignored.

1 John 1:9 gives us a wonderful promise:

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Remember, **all** means **all**! There's no sin God cannot forgive.

For me, confession takes two forms:

1. Confessing specific acts, words, thoughts, reactions, or attitudes that I recognize to be displeasing to God.

These are occurrences that I can recall, and hopefully they are very recent ones. It's good to keep a very short account with God, so this specific confession should cover a recent time period.

I'll share a personal example. Someone told me something and made a suggestion for a program at church which immediately made me angry. I could feel the anger inside of me, and it probably showed on my face.

When I was alone and reflected on that situation, I realized that the anger came from jealousy on my part, and also because I didn't think this person was giving me the credit I was due.

Well, if that's not sin, what is? Anger, jealousy, and pride—all at the same time. I was very upset with myself when I realized how quickly these things had moved into my mind. And I confessed them specifically to God, at the same time asking him to give me more insight as to why I reacted to that suggestion so strongly. You see, the more I understand that, the more I can be prepared the next time it happens, and hopefully have victory instead of defeat.

And by the way, if I had expressed those feelings to the other person (which thankfully this time I did not), I would then need to go to that person and ask their forgiveness, as well.

2. The second form of confession is the need to bring before God all my known weaknesses and inadequacies.

I've started a list of areas where I know I need to improve, and that list has grown as I've learned more about God and his principles and standards. You might call these personality weaknesses, hang-ups, or poor character traits.

Again, I'll share a few of the ones on my list, to give you an idea of what I mean.

- Overreacting—I know I tend to overreact, and when I do it's almost always bad news. So I ask God to help me overcome that weakness.
- Pride—All of us have pride in our lives, but sometimes I think I have a double dose. It's an area I constantly bring before God.
- Impatience—I've never been a very patient person. I'm asking God to change me.
- Lack of gentleness—My direct approach can be very harsh. I want to be gentle like Jesus.

This is just a partial list. But I want to tell you something really encouraging. As I've prayed about these things and daily brought them before God as well as reminding myself, changes have begun to happen. I honestly can see measurable improvement in all of the areas. And it is so marvelous to be able to look back and say, "I used to be way back there, but now I'm up here." Yes, I still have a long way to go, but the progress is a great encouragement and it gives me hope to believe I can keep on making progress, by the grace of God.

Again, I want to ask you to make a list of the areas in your life that you know need improvement. You may be tired of making all these lists, but don't give up yet. This will truly start to work miracles in your life, as you daily bring these areas to God and ask him to help you improve.

Areas in my life that need improvement:

What is Dedication?

Dedication is that part of our daily time with God when we tell him what we desire for our own spiritual lives, and we repeat to him the commitments we've made to him which we intend to continue. For me, most of these come directly from scripture, and I continually add to the list as I see more things in scripture that I want to see in my own spiritual growth.

Here are some verses that can give you a good start in beginning your dedication section:

Romans 12:1-2 This passage exhorts us to present our _____ as a
_____. It also urges us not to be
_____ to this world, but rather to have a
_____.

John 4:23-24 Jesus told us that God is seeking true _____. we need to
learn how to worship in _____ and in _____.

Luke 11:1 The disciples asked Jesus to teach them to _____.

Philippians 4:8 We need to pray that our _____ will meet the standards
set forth in this verse.

(My book, *Think About What You Think About*, covers this subject in depth.)

Psalms 17:3 We need to pray about what we _____.

Colossians 3:12-15 We need to clothe our inner person each day.
(My study entitled *What the Well-Dressed Christian Wears* covers this in depth.)

Philippians 2:3 We need to consider _____ better than ourselves.

Philippians 4:12 We need to learn to be _____ in any and every situation.

Proverbs 11:25 We need to learn how to _____ others.

James 1:19 We need to be _____ to listen and _____ to speak.

Ephesians 6:1-17 We need to put on the armor of God so that we can stand against our
enemy each day.

The _____ of truth.

The _____ of righteousness.

The _____ of peace on our feet.

The _____ of faith.

The _____ of salvation.

The _____ of the Spirit, the Word of God.

These are just a few of the many things we can pray in dedication of ourselves to God. You will discover more and more as you delve into God's Word. When you see another area that you want to become a reality in your life, stop and write it in your prayer journal.

Conclusion

Read Luke 18:14 and I Peter 5:6.

What do these two verses tell you to do?

What will happen to us if you do this?

1 Corinthians 11:31 says if we _____ ourselves, we would not come under

_____.

I strongly believe that this time of confession and dedication each day is essential in judging and humbling ourselves.

What do you think will be the results in your life if you daily follow this principle of confession and dedication?

Are you willing to make a commitment to incorporate confession and dedication into your daily time with God? If so, why not covenant with God now to do just that.



I covenant with God:

That I will institute and consistently incorporate confession and dedication in my pursuit of knowing God. I will make every effort to keep my account clear with God and not allow unconfessed and unforsaken sin to build up between us. I will seek to bring every weakness and inadequacy before him and allow him to control and change my life, my habits, my lifestyle, and my attitudes as he sees fit.

Signed _____



If you have made that covenant with God, you've made a giant step forward. It may be a reaffirmation of something you do already. And you can testify to the wonderful adventure of allowing God to change you by daily opening yourself to his gentle but needed pruning.

Suggested Assignment

1. Make your initial entries into the confession and dedication section of your prayer journal, based on the things you've discovered in this lesson.
2. Memorize 1 Corinthians 11:31: *But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment.*
3. Begin this daily time of confession and dedication right away.

Lesson 5 – Prayer Journal

Section 3: Intercession

Review

1. What are the two forms of confession we discussed in Lesson 4?
2. How would you define the dedication process we discussed in Lesson 4?
3. How can we judge ourselves?
4. What are the benefits of judging and humbling ourselves?
5. Can you quote the following verses?

Psalm 90:14, Psalm 119:11, Psalm 34:11, Corinthians 11:31

Introduction

We continue in this lesson to cover the sections of our prayer journal. Praise was section 1, confession and dedication was section 2. We now come to section 3—intercession.

Intercession is prayer to God on behalf of another person or other people.

It is a great and high privilege to be able to intercede for others. As we read about the early church in the New Testament, we see that they continually prayed for each other, and asked for the prayers of their fellow believers.

Here are some passages which illustrate how the early church prayed for each other in intercessory prayer.

2 Thessalonians 1:11 Paul said he _____ prayed for the believers in Thessalonica.

Colossians 1:9 Again Paul states that he had not _____ for the believers in Colosse.

Colossians 4:3 Here Paul asks the believers at Colosse to pray for him.

How do we pray for others?

Read Ephesians 6:18 and fill in the blanks:

And pray in the _____ on _____ occasions with _____
_____ of prayers and requests.

One thing we need to learn is that God wants us to pray about everything, and to pray very specifically. There should be no occasion in our life about which we could not pray. I remember as a teenager that my Mom took me shopping for a new coat. And before we left home she said, "Let's pray about it." That seemed strange to me, but we prayed about buying that coat. I remember that we found a coat at the first store which I liked and Mom could afford. Major accomplishment with a teenager! It taught me a great lesson early in my life—pray about everything.

Sometimes people seem to think that God can't be bothered with all the little details of their lives. But remember, God has infinite capacity, he never gets tired or sleepy, and he has told us to bring everything to him in prayer.

Here are some examples of prayer requests. Read these passages, and then write out how you would pray based on these requests.

2 Thessalonians 3:1-2

Hebrews 13:18-19

The lesson here is that we should pray for specific requests, as much as we possibly can. While we certainly can and should ask for God's blessings on others, to simply go down our list with "God bless...." as a preface to the names is not effective, fervent prayer. In fact, it can be just the lazy way out.

While our prayers for others don't necessarily need to be lengthy, they do need to be specific. Look again at the prayer requests of the Apostle Paul and you will see that they are specific and to the point. One or two sentences would cover each of those prayer requests fully. That's how we should pray for others.

What are some other good reasons for praying specifically for others?

One excellent way to pray for others is to use biblical prayers. Here are two that I have written in my prayer journal at the beginning of intercessory prayer. Frequently, I recite these prayers as I pray for others.

Philippians 1:9-11

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

Hebrews 13:20-21

May the God of peace, who through the blood of the eternal covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Let me emphasize that these prayers cannot be glibly quoted. But if you sincerely pray these prayers for other people, concentrating on the words and the meaning, and lifting it as your prayer to God for them, you will be doing some powerful praying. I'd like to have many people praying these prayers for me!

Who should we pray for?

Intercessory prayer extends to many people. Identify the people we are to pray for from the following verses:

1 Timothy 2:1 We are to pray for _____.

1 Timothy 2:2 We are to pray for those who are in _____.

1 Thessalonians 5:25 We are to pray for our _____ in Christ.

James 5:15 We are to pray for those who are _____.

Matthew 5:44 We are to pray for those who _____ us.

Praying for Non-believers

Intercessory prayer certainly includes praying for those you know who have not as yet received Christ as their Savior. I have listed them separately in my prayer journal, because they need a special kind of prayer. We know it is God's will that all men come to him, so we can pray in confidence. But we also know that God has given mankind a free will to make his or her own decisions.

Therefore, as I pray for non-believers, I ask God to do whatever is necessary in their lives to bring them to the realization of their need of Jesus Christ. I pray against the strongholds that

are keeping them from accepting Christ. For some, it is their intense pride; for others, their self-righteousness; for others, doubt and procrastination; for others, the stronghold of immorality. I pray that the things which they are looking to for security and happiness will fail them completely. I pray that other Christians will come into their lives and sow seeds.

These are strong prayers, but we show the greatest love and compassion when we pray that they will come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior, whatever it takes. Without him, their future is indeed bleak for all eternity.

Praying for Churches and Christian Ministries

In addition, we should pray for the ministries that minister to us in our lives and those we believe in and support. That would, of course, include your church, missionaries and missionary organizations, radio or television ministries, evangelistic organizations, etc. (And hopefully it will include The Christian Working Woman!)

Since I'm involved in women's ministries, I try to pray for ministries that are fighting abortion and pornography. I also pray for other women in ministry as well as ministries and ministers who have had an impact in my life and who I personally know.

Praying for Our Nation and the World

We should pray for our country and its leaders.

Intercessory prayer includes other nations of the world. One good way to pray for others countries is to choose one country that you would like to pray for, and try to educate yourself on the needs of that country so you can pray specifically. Missionaries are always glad to send you specific prayer requests. There are many resources at your church or online to give you the information you need to pray for other parts of the world.

Organizing Our Intercessory Prayer Time

You may be feeling overwhelmed to think of all these people that you need to pray for regularly. A few years ago I realized that I had to put some organization into this part of my prayer life in order to pray effectively for everyone on my list. Therefore, I divided the intercessory part of my prayer time into different days of the week.

Monday	Pray for my own family
Tuesday	Pray for my ministries, staff, board
Wednesday	Pray for my friends
Thursday	Pray for my church. Pray for non-believers

Friday Pray for my country and other nations

Saturday Pray for other ministries and missionaries

I leave Sunday open.

Of course, I can rearrange or repeat in any way. For instance, my family is on my prayer list far more than once a week! But this has helped me a great deal, because I know that I can get around to everyone at least once a week, and I don't feel so rushed or guilty because I didn't get to everyone on the list.

Obviously, the list grows, but I also prune it from time to time, as people come in and out of my life. I try never to glibly say, "I'll pray for you." If I say it, I feel a strong responsibility to do it. It's better not to tell someone you'll pray for them, than to tell them and not do it. I have one friend who has learned to stop right at that moment and pray for the person she has promised to pray for. That's not a bad idea, and I'm learning to do that more and more. As I read letters from listeners who have great needs, I often take a few moments while I'm reading to bring them before God. I can't trust my memory to keep all of those things in my very small mind!

Getting Started

To organize intercessory prayer you'll need to make some more lists! You can either make them in this workbook, or if you've got your prayer journal started already (I sure hope you have), make the lists in the intercessory section of your prayer journal. This will give you a guideline to follow.

BUT REMEMBER! You can change your prayer format to suit your needs in any way. I'm giving you these suggestions because they've worked well for me, and I know they're better than no method. Effective prayer needs structure, so either use mine, or make one of your own to use.

People I need to pray for:

Family

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Friends

Non-believers

Church Pastor(s)

Church Staff Members

Church Ministries (i.e., Sunday School, Youth Groups, etc.)

Special Needs of the Church

Other Ministries

Your Country

Those in Authority

President

Your manager

Congress

Executive of your company

Judges

Your teachers or professors

Governor

Anyone who has some authority over you

Mayor

Conclusion

Let me share with you something I've learned about praying for others. It is the greatest medicine I know of to lift yourself out of the blahs, to cure self-pity, to develop compassion and love for others, and to help you learn how to *consider others better than yourselves*, as we're admonished to do in Philippians 2:3.

But even more exciting than what it does in your own life is the joy of sharing answers to prayer. When you specifically pray for others, and then see wonderful answers to your prayer, it lifts you up and builds up your faith and gives you hope. This has happened time and time again for me as I've prayed for others, and it is truly exhilarating to see God at work in our lives as a result of our prayers.

James 5:16b says:

The prayer of a righteous man (or woman) is powerful and effective.

When we stop and realize that we've touched heaven, we've communicated with the Eternal God, and in response he has intervened in someone's life, then we begin to learn how great a privilege it is to pray for others.

No matter how great your own need is, don't neglect a time of intercessory prayer. In fact, there are many days when I spend so much time praying for others, that I have to hurry through my own requests. But that doesn't bother me much. I just tell the Lord that he surely knows my needs and the needs of my ministry, and I'm still trusting in him to meet all those needs. I know that intercessory prayer is really important, and I know how it helps me to become less self-focused—which is always good.

Here's another secret about intercessory prayer—I've learned that on those days when I cannot seem to pray for worrying, or I can't seem to pray because I keep thinking of my schedule or the day ahead, if I start with intercessory prayer on those days, I can more quickly get my mind focused on prayer and off of myself.

If you haven't already discovered the joy of intercessory prayer, then you're in for a blessing. It takes time—yes. It takes concentration—yes. It takes unselfishness—yes. But it yields great returns on your investment.

Suggested Assignment

1. Complete the intercessory prayer section in your prayer journal.
2. Consider the specific things you will pray for each person on your list.
3. Memorize James 5:16b: *The prayer of a righteous man (or woman) is powerful and effective.*

Lesson 6 – Prayer Journal

Section 4: Prayer Requests and Answers

Review

Since this is the last lesson in our study, let's review everything we've covered to this point.

1. Describe in your own words what it means to get to know God.
2. What role does the Bible play in helping us get to know God?
3. What benefits do you receive when you take time to truly praise God?
4. Why are confession and dedication such an important part of getting to know God?

5. How would you define intercessory prayer?

6. We now have (hopefully) five memory verses to quote:

Psalms 90:14, Psalm 119:11, Psalm 34:11, Corinthians 11:31, James 5:16b

Introduction

In this last lesson I want to cover the final section of our prayer journal—section 4: prayer requests and answers. Then we will close with some concluding thoughts on prayer.

The prayer of dedication is a time that we pray to God about our own spiritual well-being. But, of course, we need a time to bring our own needs, plans, desires, and activities to him for his guidance and blessing. And I do that as a part of section 4.

Praying for Our Personal Needs

As we covered in Lesson 5, God has invited us to bring everything in our lives to him in prayer. If there is something or someone in your life that is not a part of your prayer life, stop and ask yourself this question:

Why do I not pray about this situation or person?

- ☐ I forget.
- ☐ Seems too trivial.
- ☐ Don't know how to pray about it.
- ☐ I know God is displeased with this situation and I have not yet obeyed him.

Well, let's address each of those possible answers.

1. "I forget."

Forgetting to pray about something or someone is very easy to do. That's the main purpose of the prayer journal, to help us remember what and who to pray for. Therefore, this problem is solved by entering the situation or person in our prayer journal and then, of course, using it regularly.

2. "Seems too trivial."

Many Christians still are confused about God's capacity and desire to hear about everything in their lives. It really amounts to a lack of understanding of who God is and what his Word tells us. Let's try to clear up that misunderstanding once and for all.

Read 1 Peter 5:7.

How much of your anxiety are you told to give over to God?

Read Ephesians 6:18.

How many kinds of requests are you to bring to God?

Can you trust the Word of God? Do you believe it's true?

We are, therefore, led to an inescapable conclusion that God doesn't consider anything trivial. We have a misconception of God when we think he's too busy to be involved in the little things. God has infinite capacity. He is not like us. He doesn't experience burnout! Trust him! He can handle all your trivialities!

3. "Don't know how to pray about it."

Sometimes we run into situations that we just don't know how to pray about. Let me point out two wonderful passages that help us at those times.

Read 2 Chronicles 20:12 and fill in the missing blanks:

O our God, will you not judge them? For we have _____ to face this vast

army that is attacking us. We do _____ know what to do, but _____

_____.

My mother introduced me to this marvelous verse, and how often I refer to it in my prayers. My friends, I can promise you that there will always be times and things which are so large or so baffling to you, that you simply don't know how to pray. You feel absolutely helpless. Use Jehoshaphat's prayer, and just tell God you don't know what to do, but you're still trusting in him.

Read Romans 8:26b and fill in the missing blanks:

We do not know what we ought to _____ for, but the _____ himself

intercedes for us with _____ that _____ cannot express.

Isn't this absolutely terrific? The Holy Spirit prays for us when we don't know how to pray. When you're baffled, when you're too emotionally involved to be objective, when you're totally discouraged or confused, ask the blessed Holy Spirit to pray for you in words that you cannot express.

4. "I know God is displeased with this situation and I have not yet obeyed him."

I've noticed that when I'm hesitant to pray about something, I need to look at it very closely to see if there's some area of disobedience on my part. Our human tendency is to bury it, ignore it, and hope that maybe God won't notice. Well, of course, that's ridiculous because God knows everything anyway.

Read Psalm 66:17-20. What will keep God from listening to our prayers?

I like the phrase used in the NIV translation—*If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened....* Cherishing sin is when we know what God wants us to do and we haven't done it. In other words, disobedience.

I strongly encourage you to deal with any areas of disobedience in your life at once. If you don't, prayer becomes futile because God is not listening. Now, that is a serious consequence. You're paying an extremely high price to hang onto that area of disobedience. I urge you to get smart and get it right with God so that your prayers are not hindered.

What needs should we pray for?

We've already seen that God has invited us to cast all our cares on him. That includes:

- Your job
- Your sore leg
- Your car which keeps breaking down
- Bills that are due
- A promotion you want
- A test you have to take

The list is endless. We couldn't name anything that we should not pray about.

When the prayer is specific, write it down and date it. My requests and answers section looks like this:

	Date	Request	Answer	Date
1.				
2.				
3.				

Now, can you imagine if you keep track of your requests and answers over a period of time, how your heart is going to be encouraged as you see in writing the many things God has already done for you. This is one of the best ways in the world to build up your faith. Sometimes I get out an old journal and start remembering what God did for me, and the tears of joy just bubble up in my eyes. There are dates entered there to remind me of God's faithfulness to me.

I know that I would have forgotten many of those things had I not recorded them. PLEASE don't fail to keep track of your answers to specific prayers. If you do, you're going to miss many blessings.

Pray About Your Day

A good way to close your prayer time is by praying about the day ahead of you. Turn your schedule over to God, ask for his help in specific tasks, ask for compassion for the people you will interact with that day, etc. This will prepare you to be a good ambassador for him all day long.

Thoughts on Prayer

In the back of my prayer journal I have copied thoughts about prayer that I have gleaned from great books.

I'll just share one of those entries, from A. W. Tozer's *The Knowledge of the Holy*:

"Prayer is not in itself meritorious. It lays God under no obligation nor puts Him in debt to any. He hears prayer because He is good, and for no other reason. Nor is faith meritorious; it is simply confidence in the goodness of God, and the lack of it is a reflection upon God's holy character."

I try to read very good books, especially the old saints, keeping one going all the time. And inevitably I see great truths in a new light. The very act of writing them down helps me to remember. And I find that I can re-read those entries and have my heart blessed or challenged all over again.

Concluding Thoughts on Getting to Know God

Well, we've covered the four sections of the Prayer Journal, and that brings us to the end of our study. However, there are some things I'd like to point out as you begin this adventure of getting to know God.

If you rely on your emotions, you'll never make it. Getting to know God is a long-term decision and commitment that you must make. There will be many days that you will not want to apply the discipline required to get to know God. I do not come bounding out of the bed in the early morning, bubbling over with anticipation. No, like most of you, I procrastinate for ten minutes or so, push my body out of bed, crawl into the shower, and wake myself up.

I have learned that I need a shower, orange juice, and a cup of tea before I sit down to spend time with God. By that time, I'm ready to go. But without fail, the first move each day is not because I feel a great desire, but because I have set my will and firmly entrenched the habit in my life. It takes top priority because I know what happens when I neglect my time with God. I do and say things I shouldn't say much more frequently, I feel lousy, I'm less motivated—you name it! So experience has taught me not to let my feelings decide for me.

Some days I am exhilarated throughout the entire time with God. The Word of God comes alive immediately, prayer is so easy and the time just flies. Some days I start to feel the effects half-way through my time with God. Some days the feelings seem to never arrive. But that doesn't mean that my time was not effective.

For those of you who are married or have ever been "in love," you know that the feelings you have for that person you truly love can fluctuate. If your commitment is based on your feelings, that relationship surely won't last very long or have much opportunity to develop. Of course, that is one reason we have so many divorces.

I encourage you not to allow your emotional state of mind to control your time with God. That is another reason that having a structure is very helpful. Even when I don't feel like praising God, I can go through my prayer journal, reciting what I have written there and offer praise with my lips. I believe God is pleased when he sees that our commitment to knowing him is not based on feelings.

While I have found a structure for praying extremely helpful, I do not feel obligated to it in any way. I want to always be flexible so that God can speak to me in unique ways. That means there are days when I don't use the structure very much at all. They are a small percentage of the time, but I feel no guilt to use my time with God in some other less structured fashion, if I sense that is the right thing to do.

There are days when I don't make it at all. I really work hard at holding these down to a bare minimum, but please understand that I have those days, too. We are not living under law, we're living under grace, and God knows when, for some legitimate reason, our schedule has been interrupted and the time we planned to spend with him has been assigned to some other activity. I don't feel guilty about that as a rule, because it's usually unavoidable and I know that God knows why it happened. Besides, we can have fellowship with him all day long, in addition to that special time with him, so it's not as though we don't talk to him at all.

Don't be surprised to discover that you get sleepy in this process. Dr. Charles Stanley talks about how Satan attacked him for a while by causing him to become immediately very sleepy as soon as he would start to pray. When he finally realized what was happening, he prayed against Satan's attacks and won the victory over that sleepiness.

When I catch myself falling off to sleep in the middle of reading or praying, I stand up and say out loud something like, "Satan, forget it, you're not stealing my time with God. In the name of Jesus I command you to leave me alone." Of course, sometimes I'm sleepy from lack of sleep! In either case, I get up and get another cup of tea or something like that to get the juices flowing again. It's a common problem.

Similar to becoming sleepy is your mind wandering while you're reading or praying. My former pastor, Dr. Erwin Lutzer, suggests keeping a pad and pencil nearby and as things come to your mind about your day, write them down and then you can stop thinking about them. That is helpful.

Some days a wandering mind is a major problem for me. I'm a morning person and once I get going I want to get active. Sitting still for a long period of time goes against my natural instincts. So, concentration is probably my biggest problem. I usually begin by asking God to give me a focused mind. In my opinion, this is something that will always present a struggle for me and I'm sure I have more to learn about how to keep my concentration during my time with God.

Don't discredit spiritual warfare. There are some major topics concerning prayer that I have not tried to cover in this brief study. One is warfare praying. Many Christians are not aware of how to come against our enemy, Satan, and pray for his defeat and the defeat of his demons in our lives and the lives of others. That is commonly referred to as warfare praying. Let me highly recommend two books which cover this subject beautifully:

- *The Adversary* by Mark I. Bubeck
- *Overcoming the Adversary* by Mark I. Bubeck

Here are some other books on prayer that I highly recommend to you:

- *With Christ in the School of Prayer* by Andrew Murray
- *The Hour That Changes the World* by Dick Eastman
- *Handle with Prayer* by Charles F. Stanley

There are a few great books that I keep close by and frequently read from during my time with God. But I limit that non-Bible reading time, because the Word of God needs first priority. Here are some books that I read and re-read. They are very helpful in getting to know God.

- *Let Go* by Fenelon
- *The Pursuit of God* by A. W. Tozer
- *The Knowledge of the Holy* by A. W. Tozer
- *Knowing God* by J. I. Packer
- *Springs in the Valley* -a devotional book by Mrs. Charles Cowman
- *A Diary of Private Prayers* by John Baillie

Conclusion

Well, the adventure is now yours. I truly hope and pray that this study has given you some good ideas and help in a serious pursuit of knowing God.

I conclude by reminding you that this is a structure I've evolved for myself. I would encourage you to try it, and change it in any way that improves it for you. No two of us are alike. God doesn't make "cookie-cutter" Christians. He allows us to be unique.

But regardless of our differences, one thing we all have in common: We need to know God better and better all the time. In comparison, nothing else really matters.

I will close where we began, with the words of our Lord, which so beautifully express the importance of knowing God:

Now **this** is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent (John 17:3).

Nothing is more important than eternal life, and eternal life comes by knowing God and Jesus Christ. Go for it.

Suggested Assignment

1. Complete your prayer journal by entering specific prayer requests in Section 4.
2. Repeat all your new memory verses at least every other day, so that they stay with you.
3. Commit yourself to 21 days, spending this daily time with God—and by then you'll be hooked.

Note: We have published *A Prayer Journal*, using the structure which is taught here. You can download your copy at christianworkingwoman.org

Memory Verses

Psalm 90:14

Satisfy us in the morning with your unfailing love, that we may sing for joy and be glad all our days.

Psalm 119:11

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 34:1

I will extol the Lord at all times; his praise will always be on my lips.

1 Corinthians 11:31

But if we judge ourselves, we would not come under judgment.

James 5:16b

The prayer of a righteous man (or woman) is powerful and effective.

A Guide on Getting to Know God

Leader's Guide Notes

Thank you for being willing to lead this Bible Study. The good news is that you don't have to teach this study, just lead the discussion. If leading a Bible study is new to you, don't worry. You don't have to be an expert on the Bible or a trained teacher to lead this study.

The Bible Study is easy to follow, with questions that are designed to get everyone involved. Your job is to guide the discussion through the various questions, keep track of time and keep the discussion moving.

Leading the Sessions

Here are some key things to keep in mind as you lead the sessions:

- You will want to study the lesson in advance, so that you are thoroughly prepared to help with the discussion.
- Have the room set up in advance.
- **Always** begin and end on time. Regardless of how many people arrive on time, you need to establish that they can depend on this study starting and ending on time. However, some will still come late or have to leave early, and you want to make it clear from the beginning that they have that flexibility and are welcome whenever they can get there.
- Explain that this study is meant to be a discussion and encourage everyone to participate. However, do not put pressure on those who may be hesitant to speak, especially during the first few sessions. Don't be afraid of silence. People may need time to think about the question before formulating their answers. It's always good to solicit more than one answer to a question. Ask, "What do the rest of you think?" or "Anyone else?"
- Affirm the contributions of others whenever possible. Let people know you appreciate their insights. If you feel a response is wrong—not in accordance with God's Word—don't reject it. Rather ask something like, "How did you come to that conclusion?" Or ask others in the group what they think about the question.
- Be considerate of first timers. It's often best not to call on them for an answer, as they may not feel comfortable contributing the first time they participate. Keep that in mind if you choose to ask for participation by going around the table or the circle. Everyone may not want to contribute, especially first timers.
- Keep the discussion on track. It's easy for people to start down their own "bunny trails" and take the discussion in a different direction than the study intends. It will be your responsibility to bring the discussion back to the workbook and keep it moving, otherwise you will have difficulty completing the lesson.

- Remember that the purpose of the study is to understand what the Bible has to say, and

therefore personal opinions have to be considered in light of what scripture says. Whether or not a person agrees with what the Bible says, you want to keep bringing the discussion back to the biblical foundation.

- Avoid letting any one person monopolize the discussion. Obviously some people are more verbal than others, but if one person begins to answer every question and intimidate others from participating, it will have a negative impact on the group. It is your challenge to include that person but not allow them to take over!
- Avoid discussing various churches or denominations. Never allow anyone to malign or gossip about a church, an organization or a person, even if you must interrupt that person.
- Encourage the members of the group to look at the lessons in advance, if possible, but don't put any undue pressure on them.
- Most importantly, pray! Ask God to give you wisdom as the leader, to bring the people he wants into the study, and to use it for his glory. Bathe your efforts in prayer, asking other trusted friends to pray with you, so that at each step of the way, you are attuned to God's voice and covered in prayer. This is truly critical to your success.

About The Christian Working Woman:

In 1984 Mary Whelchel Lowman began this ministry as a once-a-week radio program on one station in Chicago. Her passion then, as now, was to challenge workplace Christians to see their jobs as more than just a place to earn a living. Every Christian is called to be an ambassador for Jesus Christ in all areas of their lives, including the workplace.

The ministry has grown from that small beginning to now being broadcast on over 400 stations nationally and internationally. Mary has written many books and Bible studies, and her resources are available on video and podcast at christianworkingwoman.org, YouTube, your favorite podcast platform, or by calling 630-462-0552.

Read Through the Bible in a Year

January

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Genesis 1-2	Matthew 1
2	Genesis 3-5	Matthew 2
3	Genesis 6-8	Matthew 3
4	Genesis 9-11	Matthew 4
5	Genesis 12-14	Matthew 5:1-26
6	Genesis 15-17	Matthew 5:27-48
7	Genesis 18-19	Matthew 6
8	Genesis 20-22	Matthew 7
9	Genesis 23-24	Matthew 8
10	Genesis 25-26	Matthew 9:1-17
11	Genesis 27-28	Matthew 9:18-38
12	Genesis 29-30	Matthew 10:1-23
13	Genesis 31-32	Matthew 10:24-42
14	Genesis 33-35	Matthew 11
15	Genesis 36-37	Matthew 12:1-21
16	Genesis 38-40	Matthew 12:22-50
17	Genesis 41	Matthew 13:1-32

18	Genesis 42-43	Matthew 13:33-58
19	Genesis 44-45	Matthew 14:1-21
20	Genesis 46-48	Matthew 14:22-36
21	Genesis 49-50	Matthew 15:1-20
22	Exodus 1-3	Matthew 15:21-39
23	Exodus 4-6	Matthew 16
24	Exodus 7-8	Matthew 17
25	Exodus 9-10	Matthew 18:1-20
26	Exodus 11-12	Matthew 18:21-35
27	Exodus 13-15	Matthew 19:1-15
28	Exodus 16-18	Matthew 19:16-30
29	Exodus 19-21	Matthew 20:1-16
30	Exodus 22-24	Matthew 20:17-34
31	Exodus 25-26	Matthew 21:1-22

February

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Exodus 27-28	Matthew 21:23-46
2	Exodus 29-30	Matthew 22:1-22
3	Exodus 31-33	Matthew 22:23-46
4	Exodus 34-36	Matthew 23:1-22

5	Exodus 37-38	Matthew 23:23-39
6	Exodus 39-40	Matthew 24:1-22
7	Leviticus 1-3	Matthew 24:23-51
8	Leviticus 4-6	Matthew 25:1-30
9	Leviticus 7-9	Matthew 25:31-46
10	Leviticus 10-12	Matthew 26:1-19
11	Leviticus 13	Matthew 26:20-54
12	Leviticus 14	Matthew 26:55-75
13	Leviticus 15-17	Matthew 27:1-31
14	Leviticus 18-19	Matthew 27:32-66
15	Leviticus 20-21	Matthew 28
16	Leviticus 22-23	Mark 1:1-22
17	Leviticus 24-25	Mark 1:23-45
18	Leviticus 26-27	Mark 2
19	Numbers 1-2	Mark 3:1-21
20	Numbers 3-4	Mark 3:22-35
21	Numbers 5-6	Mark 4:1-20
22	Numbers 7	Mark 4:21-41
23	Numbers 8-10	Mark 5:1-20
24	Numbers 11-13	Mark 5:21-43
25	Numbers 14-15	Mark 6:1-32

26	Numbers 16-17	Mark 6:33-56
27	Numbers 18-20	Mark 7:1-13
28	Numbers 21-22	Mark 7:14-37
29	Numbers 23-25	Mark 8:1-21

March

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Numbers 26-27	Mark 8:22-38
2	Numbers 28-29	Mark 9:1-29
3	Numbers 30-31	Mark 9:30-50
4	Numbers 32-33	Mark 10:1-31
5	Numbers 34-36	Mark 10:32-52
6	Deuteronomy 1-2	Mark 11:1-19
7	Deuteronomy 3-4	Mark 11:20-33
8	Deuteronomy 5-7	Mark 12:1-27
9	Deuteronomy 8-10	Mark 12:28-44
10	Deuteronomy 11-13	Mark 13:1-13
11	Deuteronomy 14-16	Mark 13:14-37
12	Deuteronomy 17-19	Mark 14:1-25
13	Deuteronomy 20-22	Mark 14:26-50
14	Deuteronomy 23-25	Mark 14:51-72

15	Deuteronomy 26-27	Mark 15:1-26
16	Deuteronomy 28	Mark 15:27-47
17	Deuteronomy 29-30	Mark 16
18	Deuteronomy 31-32	Luke 1:1-23
19	Deuteronomy 33-34	Luke 1:24-56
20	Joshua 1-3	Luke 1:57-80
21	Joshua 4-6	Luke 2:1-24
22	Joshua 7-8	Luke 2:25-52
23	Joshua 9-10	Luke 3
24	Joshua 11-13	Luke 4:1-32
25	Joshua 14-15	Luke 4:33-44
26	Joshua 16-18	Luke 5:1-16
27	Joshua 19-20	Luke 5:17-39
28	Joshua 21-22	Luke 6:1-26
29	Joshua 23-24	Luke 6:27-49
30	Judges 1-2	Luke 7:1-30
31	Judges 3-5	Luke 7:31-50

April

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Judges 6-7	Luke 8:1-21

2	Judges 8-9	Luke 8:22-56
3	Judges 10-11	Luke 9:1-36
4	Judges 12-14	Luke 9:37-62
5	Judges 15-17	Luke 10:1-24
6	Judges 18-19	Luke 10:25-42
7	Judges 20-21	Luke 11:1-28
8	Ruth 1-4	Luke 11:29-54
9	1 Samuel 1-3	Luke 12:1-34
10	1 Samuel 4-6	Luke 12:35-59
11	1 Samuel 7-9	Luke 13:1-21
12	1 Samuel 10-12	Luke 13:22-35
13	1 Samuel 13-14	Luke 14:1-24
14	1 Samuel 15-16	Luke 14:25-35
15	1 Samuel 17-18	Luke 15:1-10
16	1 Samuel 19-21	Luke 15:11-32
17	1 Samuel 22-24	Luke 16:1-18
18	1 Samuel 25-26	Luke 16:19-31
19	1 Samuel 27-29	Luke 17:1-19
20	1 Samuel 30-31	Luke 17:20-37
21	2 Samuel 1-3	Luke 18:1-17
22	2 Samuel 4-6	Luke 18:18-43

23	2 Samuel 7-9	Luke 19:1-28
24	2 Samuel 10-12	Luke 19:29-48
25	2 Samuel 13-14	Luke 20:1-26
26	2 Samuel 15-16	Luke 20:27-47
27	2 Samuel 17-18	Luke 21:1-19
28	2 Samuel 19-20	Luke 21:20-38
29	2 Samuel 21-22	Luke 22:1-30
30	2 Samuel 23-24	Luke 22:31-53

May

Date	Morning	Evening
1	1 Kings 1-2	Luke 22:54-71
2	1 Kings 3-5	Luke 23:1-26
3	1 Kings 6-7	Luke 23:27-38
4	1 Kings 8-9	Luke 23:39-56
5	1 Kings 10-11	Luke 24:1-35
6	1 Kings 12-13	Luke 24:36-53
7	1 Kings 14-15	John 1:1-28
8	1 Kings 16-18	John 1:29-51
9	1 Kings 19-20	John 2

10	1 Kings 21-22	John 3:1-21
11	2 Kings 1-3	John 3:22-36
12	2 Kings 4-5	John 4:1-30
13	2 Kings 6-8	John 4:31-54
14	2 Kings 9-11	John 5:1-24
15	2 Kings 12-14	John 5:25-47
16	2 Kings 15-17	John 6:1-21
17	2 Kings 18-19	John 6:22-44
18	2 Kings 20-22	John 6:45-71
19	2 Kings 23-25	John 7:1-31
20	1 Chronicles 1-2	John 7:32-53
21	1 Chronicles 3-5	John 8:1-20
22	1 Chronicles 6-7	John 8:21-36
23	1 Chronicles 8-10	John 8:37-71
24	1 Chronicles 11-13	John 9:1-23
25	1 Chronicles 14-16	John 9:24-41
26	1 Chronicles 17-19	John 10:1-21
27	1 Chronicles 20-22	John 10:22-42
28	1 Chronicles 23-25	John 11:1-17
29	1 Chronicles 26-27	John 11:18-46
30	1 Chronicles 28-29	John 11:47-57

31	2 Chronicles 1-3	John 12:1-19
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June

Date	Morning	Evening
1	2 Chronicles 4-6	John 12:20-50
2	2 Chronicles 7-9	John 13:1-17
3	2 Chronicles 10-12	John 13:18-38
4	2 Chronicles 13-16	John 14
5	2 Chronicles 17-19	John 15
6	2 Chronicles 20-22	John 16:1-15
7	2 Chronicles 23-25	John 16:16-33
8	2 Chronicles 26-28	John 17
9	2 Chronicles 29-31	John 18:1-23
10	2 Chronicles 32-33	John 18:24-40
11	2 Chronicles 34-36	John 19:1-22
12	Ezra 1-2	John 19:23-42
13	Ezra 3-5	John 20
14	Ezra 6-8	John 21
15	Ezra 9-10	Acts 1
16	Nehemiah 1-3	Acts 2:1-16
17	Nehemiah 4-6	Acts 2:17-37

18	Nehemiah 7-8	Acts 3
19	Nehemiah 9-11	Acts 4:1-22
20	Nehemiah 12-13	Acts 4:23-37
21	Esther 1-3	Acts 5:1-16
22	Esther 4-6	Acts 5:17-42
23	Esther 7-10	Acts 6
24	Job 1-3	Acts 7:1-19
25	Job 4-6	Acts 7:20-43
26	Job 7-9	Acts 7:44-60
27	Job 10-12	Acts 8:1-25
28	Job 13-15	Acts 8:26-40
29	Job 16-18	Acts 9:1-22
30	Job 19-20	Acts 9:23-43

July

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Job 21-22	Acts 10:1-23
2	Job 23-25	Acts 10:24-48
3	Job 26-28	Acts 11
4	Job 29-30	Acts 12
5	Job 31-32	Acts 13:1-23

6	Job 33-34	Acts 13:24-52
7	Job 35-37	Acts 14
8	Job 38-39	Acts 15:1-21
9	Job 40-42	Acts 15:22-41
10	Psalms 1-3	Acts 16:1-15
11	Psalms 4-6	Acts 16:16-40
12	Psalms 7-9	Acts 17:1-15
13	Psalms 10-12	Acts 17:16-34
14	Psalms 13-16	Acts 18
15	Psalms 17-18	Acts 19:1-20
16	Psalms 19-21	Acts 19:21-41
17	Psalms 22-24	Acts 20:1-16
18	Psalms 25-27	Acts 20:17-38
19	Psalms 28-30	Acts 21:1-14
20	Psalms 31-33	Acts 21:15-40
21	Psalms 34-35	Acts 22
22	Psalms 36-37	Acts 23:1-11
23	Psalms 38-40	Acts 23:12-35
24	Psalms 41-43	Acts 24
25	Psalms 44-46	Acts 25
26	Psalms 47-49	Acts 26

27	Psalms 50-52	Acts 27:1-25
28	Psalms 53-55	Acts 27:26-44
29	Psalms 56-58	Acts 28:1-15
30	Psalms 59-61	Acts 28:16-31
31	Psalms 62-64	Romans 1

August

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Psalms 65-67	Romans 2
2	Psalms 68-69	Romans 3
3	Psalms 70-72	Romans 4
4	Psalms 73-74	Romans 5
5	Psalms 75-77	Romans 6
6	Psalms 78	Romans 7
7	Psalms 79-81	Romans 8:1-18
8	Psalms 82-84	Romans 8:19-39
9	Psalms 85-87	Romans 9
10	Psalms 88-89	Romans 10
11	Psalms 90-92	Romans 11:1-21
12	Psalms 93-95	Romans 11:22-36
13	Psalms 96-98	Romans 12

14	Psalms 99-102	Romans 13
15	Psalms 103-104	Romans 14
16	Psalms 105-106	Romans 15:1-20
17	Psalms 107-108	Romans 15:21-33
18	Psalms 109-111	Romans 16
19	Psalms 112-115	1 Corinthians 1
20	Psalms 116-118	1 Corinthians 2
21	Psalms 119:1-48	1 Corinthians 3
22	Psalms 119:49-104	1 Corinthians 4
23	Psalms 119:105-176	1 Corinthians 5
24	Psalms 120-123	1 Corinthians 6
25	Psalms 124-127	1 Corinthians 7:1-24
26	Psalms 128-131	1 Corinthians 7:25-40
27	Psalms 132-135	1 Corinthians 8
28	Psalms 136-138	1 Corinthians 9
29	Psalms 139-141	1 Corinthians 10:1-13
30	Psalms 142-144	1 Corinthians 10:14-33
31	Psalms 145-147	1 Corinthians 11:1-15

September

Date	Morning	Evening
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1	Psalms 148-150	1 Corinthians 11:16-34
2	Proverbs 1-2	1 Corinthians 12
3	Proverbs 3-4	1 Corinthians 13
4	Proverbs 5-6	1 Corinthians 14:1-20
5	Proverbs 7-8	1 Corinthians 14:21-40
6	Proverbs 9-10	1 Corinthians 15:1-32
7	Proverbs 11-12	1 Corinthians 15:33-58
8	Proverbs 13-14	1 Corinthians 16
9	Proverbs 15-16	2 Corinthians 1
10	Proverbs 17-18	2 Corinthians 2
11	Proverbs 19-20	2 Corinthians 3
12	Proverbs 21-22	2 Corinthians 4
13	Proverbs 23-24	2 Corinthians 5
14	Proverbs 25-27	2 Corinthians 6
15	Proverbs 28-29	2 Corinthians 7
16	Proverbs 30-31	2 Corinthians 8
17	Ecclesiastes 1-3	2 Corinthians 9
18	Ecclesiastes 4-6	2 Corinthians 10
19	Ecclesiastes 7-9	2 Corinthians 11:1-15
20	Ecclesiastes 10-12	2 Corinthians 11:16-33
21	Song of Solomon 1-3	2 Corinthians 12

22	Song of Solomon 4-5	2 Corinthians 13
23	Song of Solomon 6-8	Galatians 1
24	Isaiah 1-3	Galatians 2
25	Isaiah 4-6	Galatians 3
26	Isaiah 7-9	Galatians 4
27	Isaiah 10-12	Galatians 5
28	Isaiah 13-15	Galatians 6
29	Isaiah 16-18	Ephesians 1
30	Isaiah 19-21	Ephesians 2

October

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Isaiah 22-23	Ephesians 3
2	Isaiah 24-26	Ephesians 4
3	Isaiah 27-28	Ephesians 5
4	Isaiah 29-30	Ephesians 6
5	Isaiah 31-33	Philippians 1
6	Isaiah 34-36	Philippians 2
7	Isaiah 37-38	Philippians 3

8	Isaiah 39-40	Philippians 4
9	Isaiah 41-42	Colossians 1
10	Isaiah 43-44	Colossians 2
11	Isaiah 45-47	Colossians 3
12	Isaiah 48-49	Colossians 4
13	Isaiah 50-52	1 Thessalonians 1
14	Isaiah 53-55	1 Thessalonians 2
15	Isaiah 56-58	1 Thessalonians 3
16	Isaiah 59-61	1 Thessalonians 4
17	Isaiah 62-64	1 Thessalonians 5
18	Isaiah 65-66	2 Thessalonians 1
19	Jeremiah 1-2	2 Thessalonians 2
20	Jeremiah 3-4	2 Thessalonians 3
21	Jeremiah 5-6	1 Timothy 1
22	Jeremiah 7-8	1 Timothy 2
23	Jeremiah 9-10	1 Timothy 3
24	Jeremiah 11-13	1 Timothy 4
25	Jeremiah 14-16	1 Timothy 5
26	Jeremiah 17-19	1 Timothy 6
27	Jeremiah 20-22	2 Timothy 1
28	Jeremiah 23-24	2 Timothy 2

29	Jeremiah 25-26	2 Timothy 3
30	Jeremiah 27-28	2 Timothy 4
31	Jeremiah 29-30	Titus 1

November

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Jeremiah 31-32	Titus 2
2	Jeremiah 33-35	Titus 3
3	Jeremiah 36-37	Philemon 1
4	Jeremiah 38-39	Hebrews 1
5	Jeremiah 40-42	Hebrews 2
6	Jeremiah 43-45	Hebrews 3
7	Jeremiah 46-48	Hebrews 4
8	Jeremiah 49-50	Hebrews 5
9	Jeremiah 51-52	Hebrews 6
10	Lamentations 1-2	Hebrews 7
11	Lamentations 3-5	Hebrews 8
12	Ezekiel 1-3	Hebrews 9

13	Ezekiel 4-6	Hebrews 10: 1-23
14	Ezekiel 7-9	Hebrews 10: 24-39
15	Ezekiel 10-12	Hebrews 11: 1-19
16	Ezekiel 13-15	Hebrews 11: 20-40
17	Ezekiel 16	Hebrews 12
18	Ezekiel 17-19	Hebrews 13
19	Ezekiel 20-21	James 1
20	Ezekiel 22-23	James 2
21	Ezekiel 24-26	James 3
22	Ezekiel 27-28	James 4
23	Ezekiel 29-31	James 5
24	Ezekiel 32-33	1 Peter 1
25	Ezekiel 34-35	1 Peter 2
26	Ezekiel 36-37	1 Peter 3
27	Ezekiel 38-39	1 Peter 4
28	Ezekiel 40	1 Peter 5
29	Ezekiel 41-42	2 Peter 1
30	Ezekiel 43-44	2 Peter 2

December

Date	Morning	Evening
1	Ezekiel 45-46	2 Peter 3
2	Ezekiel 47-48	1 John 1
3	Daniel 1-2	1 John 2
4	Daniel 3-4	1 John 3
5	Daniel 5-6	1 John 4
6	Daniel 7-8	1 John 5
7	Daniel 9-10	2 John 1
8	Daniel 11-12	3 John 1
9	Hosea 1-4	Jude 1
10	Hosea 5-8	Revelation 1
11	Hosea 9-11	Revelation 2
12	Hosea 12-14	Revelation 3
13	Joel 1-3	Revelation 4
14	Amos 1-3	Revelation 5
15	Amos 4-6	Revelation 6
16	Amos 7-9	Revelation 7
17	Obadiah 1	Revelation 8
18	Jonah 1-4	Revelation 9
19	Micah 1-3	Revelation 10

20	Micah 4-5	Revelation 11
21	Micah 6-7	Revelation 12
22	Nahum 1-3	Revelation 13
23	Habakkuk 1-3	Revelation 14
24	Zephaniah 1-3	Revelation 15
25	Haggai 1-2	Revelation 16
26	Zechariah 1-3	Revelation 17
27	Zechariah 4-6	Revelation 18
28	Zechariah 7-9	Revelation 19
29	Zechariah 10-12	Revelation 20
30	Zechariah 13-14	Revelation 21
31	Malachi 1-4	Revelation 22



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