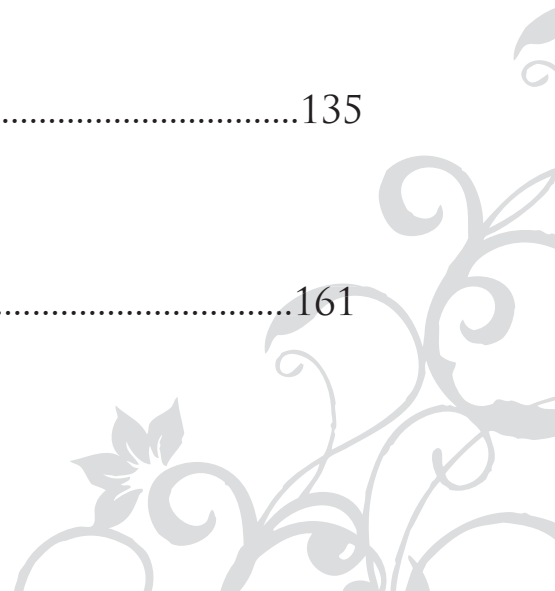




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INTRODUCTION

If the President of the United States extended a special invitation to you to come to the Oval office, would you go?

Picture the President issuing this invitation because he wants to talk to you – to tell you things that are to come today and to come for the future. The President wants to hear about the things that are important to you; the burdens that press your heart and emotions. Would you dare snub him? Would you tell him, “Thanks, but I’m too busy.” NO! Even if you did not vote for him, I’m willing to guess that no one reading this would EVER snub an invitation from the President of the United States – the leader of the free world – the most powerful man in the world.

Now forget the President. Do you realize that the King over all kings and presidents in the world, the Ruler over all creation **does** extend an invitation to us each day to come to His office? His is not an Oval office, but the very Throne Room of heaven. It does not matter what denomination you are, or whether you even consider yourself religious. Your gender, culture, race, or socioeconomic background do not matter either — you are invited! You are summoned into the very Throne Room of heaven as often as you will come. The King, God Almighty Himself, wants to comfort you, encourage you, direct you and guide you. Will you snub Him?

This holy invitation is extended to each of us continuously. Sadly, instead of coming to the King, we choose instead to fill our lives with cheap substitutes offering to fulfill and bring meaning to our lives. Some of the world’s seemingly most enviable people are those who seem to have it all: beauty (often described for women in our culture as a size 2 body shape), fortune, well-mannered children, the right house, the right neighborhood, all the cool toys and trappings. Yet people who reach the top are often surprised to find emptiness awaiting them. Human beings were made in the image of God with a God-sized hole that only a meaningful RELATIONSHIP with Him can satisfy. **True joy and contentment is not dependent on circumstances, but comes from having a meaningful love relationship with God through Jesus Christ.**

This study is about

- establishing a lifestyle of walking with Jesus.
- learning how to **know** Him and encountering Him on daily basis through a vibrant quiet time.
- getting rid of our religious mindsets and making our faith a lifestyle, not just a weekly visit to a building.
- taking Jesus out of our Sunday morning box and establishing a real relationship with Him that fulfills us unlike anything else this world offers.

This Bible study is to help you begin to maximize your understanding of how to use the Prayer Journal, *Intimacy with God*. You will find you can use this Journal not just for the short season we are together, but for the rest of your life as you study God’s Word.

BEFORE YOU START

1. The Prayer Journal—*Intimacy with God, Your Daily Guide to Prayer*—is designed to accompany **this study**. **This particular journal is not necessary, but you will need a journal or notebook of some type to help you apply all that you learn.**
2. Overview: Since the Prayer Journal is meant to be used for the rest of your life as you study God’s Word, I have begun with the basics of Christianity. The following is a breakdown of where we will go in this study.

Unit 1: The Foundation of the Christian Faith

Unit 2: Establishing a Love Relationship with Jesus

Unit 3: Establishing a Quiet Time

Unit 4: Prayer

- The basics of prayer
- Praise
- Thanksgiving
- Confession
- Renewal/Listening
- Intercession

We will begin to use the Prayer Journal on a daily basis towards the end of Unit 3.

3. Review Question: Each day you will be asked a review question. This helps solidify in your heart and mind what you learned.
4. Journal Response: During week 4, in lieu of a Review question, we will use a Journal Response question. This daily question will help you maximize the use of your Journal. It will also help you develop lifetime habits as you seek to walk with Jesus and study His Word.
5. Weekly Review: Each week, use day five to review the week’s lessons. Answering the daily review question will help you immensely.
6. The version of the Bible cited throughout this study is the **NIV**.
7. While doing each day’s study, **underline anything that jumps out at you** that is meaningful, or that speaks to a situation you may be facing.
8. During your class day, **bring sticky notes or extra pieces of paper**. (You should do this for every Bible study you attend.) If anyone says something that is meaningful to you or that you want to remember, write it down. This most likely is the Holy Spirit speaking to you through a fellow group member. Record these in your Listening Section. Don’t discount small group discussion – it could be just what God wanted you to hear. You don’t want to forget it!
9. Most importantly, **PRAY before you start each day’s lesson**. Ask God to “give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that you may know Him better.” (Ephesians 1:17).

- 10. Future use: The Journal is to be an extension of your Bible study materials.** Develop the habit of using the Journal to respond to what you are learning in Bible study, your own personal study, Sunday school or church. As we work through this study together, this concept will become clearer.



OVERVIEW OF THE JOURNAL

Intimacy with God, Your Daily Guide to Prayer is divided into four sections.

1. Introduction – defines the why, what, and how of a quiet time.
2. Basic fundamentals of Prayer— sections define the basics of prayer encouraging application. The categories are Praise, Thanksgiving, Confession, Renewal, and Listening.
3. Requests— represent each day of the week. Divide your prayer needs by the days of the week.
4. Prayer Prompt section – this section encourages you to pray Scripture. This will deepen your prayer life and train you for a lifetime of prayer. Praying Scripture is POWERFUL!

Let's get started!



THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH

WEEK ONE

Day 1 | Back to Basics

Day 2 | The Truth About God

Day 3 | The Truth About God, Part 2

Day 4 | Are You God's Child?

Day 5 | Review





THIS WEEK'S TREASURE

...

“THESE ARE NOT JUST IDLE
WORDS FOR YOU — [THE BIBLE]
THEY ARE YOUR LIFE.”

DEUTERONOMY 32:46-47

BACK TO BASICS

For years I attended church, yet God was not *REAL* to me. What I did know of Him was kept in a “Sunday morning box.” When I joined a Bible study, He stayed in my Monday evening box. Looking back, I was merely going through the motions of “religion.” I had no idea that the God of the Universe was pursuing a love relationship with me.

The Bible study I attended was also attended by roughly 500 other women and 60+ leaders. The study was a seven-year study. For each year I attended, I proudly told anyone who cared the number of years I had completed. I lived under an illusion that the number of years in Bible study equated to my Bible knowledge and spiritual maturity. Oh, how I was mistaken! Spiritual maturity comes not from the number of years under one’s belt, but by the day-by-day study and application of God’s Word.

One year, God revealed His sense of humor when I was asked to join this group of 60+ leaders. What an honor to be a leader! To me these women were spiritual giants. Not because of the Bible facts they knew, but because of the wisdom they exuded in every situation. They demonstrated a genuine kindness and humility towards others that I had never observed before. They were filled with a peace that could not be articulated in the midst of major trials some of them were experiencing. They were each the kind of woman I aspired to be. I had great admiration for these women. Now, I was one of them — however by title only.

Inside this circle of Christian women, I saw their surrender and realized I was merely putting on a charade. Outside the circle, I looked and sounded like the rest of the world. The things I did, the places I went, the language I used, the clothes I wore, and the way I handled difficulties did not reflect the title I bore. I had two personalities: one for my church friends, and another for everyone else.

During the years I was privileged to serve with these women, I began to desperately want what these women had. I found myself leaving the leaders’ meeting each week begging God to allow me to know Him the way they knew Him. Then one day, He led me to their secret. It is found in this week’s treasure.

The Lord began showing me that the Bible was not to be a book that sets on a shelf. The Bible was not to be brought out just for show on Sunday morning. The Bible was not to be used as a text book for where I could find the answers to the questions for Bible study so that I could attend with all the blanks filled in. The Bible was not to be treated as just another book with idle words written in it – **the Bible was to be my life.**

Dear friend, did you know there is a God in heaven who passionately loves you and me? On the pages of this study, my desire is that you too may come to know Him in a real and personal way. God is real.

INTIMACY WITH GOD

God is available and accessible to us 24 hours a day/7 days a week. He makes Himself known through the pages of the Bible.

If we merely go through the motions of religion or through the motions of Bible study, we will never truly know God. God wants us to **KNOW HIM** – intimately and personally. He wants us to know the reality of His presence in our everyday lives – the Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays etc. He wants us to know the sound of His voice so that we can hear Him when He is speaking to us – to guide us, to direct us, to give us wisdom. The goal of this study is not for us to be religious women spouting off religious jargon. **The goal is to be women who KNOW Jesus personally and are changed as a result of this relationship. Women whose lives bear witness to the reality of His Presence in our families, marriages, places of business, churches, schools, and circles of influence.** If this is your desire too, settle in, grab a cup of coffee or tea, and let's begin our journey together!

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE BIBLE

1. What do you believe to be true about the Bible? (check all that apply)

- **A good book full of moral principles for living**
- **An old, outdated book**
- **A book written by many different people**
- **The inspired Word of God – the text of Scripture is true**
- **An inspired book full of symbolic language and metaphors used to prove a point or moral lesson.**

Just yesterday, I read in the morning paper that only 47% of Americans believe that the Bible is true¹. Sadly, I once had a minister chastise me for being a “literalist.” In order for us to know the truth about God, we must first know the truth about His Word – the Bible.

The Bible is the immutable and inerrant Word of God. “Immutable”² means that it does not change or is it able to be changed. ” Inerrant³ means that it contains NO mistakes. The Bible will one day be totally fulfilled.

The Bible is a unique book comprised of 66 smaller books. It is divided into two testaments: The Old Testament and the New Testament, with Jesus as the bright light that bridges them.

OLD TESTAMENT

The Old Testament (OT) reveals the creation of man, the fall of man (when sin entered the world), the flood, the call of Abraham; the Ten Commandments and the Law. The Old Testament records the history of God's relationship with Israel, His chosen people. Throughout the OT, there extends a line of prophecies concerning a Deliverer-Savior, the Messiah, and the institution of a new covenant. The fulfillment of these prophecies is found in the New Testament (NT).

¹ (Raleigh, NC) News and Observer, p1 A, June 24, 2008. Not sure of the validity of these statistics...

² Encarta Dictionary; English; (North America)

³ Encarta Dictionary; English; (North America)

NEW TESTAMENT

There is a span of 400 years between the last book of the Old Testament and the period of time addressed by the New Testament (NT). The NT describes the new arrangement of God with men through Jesus Christ. In all Bible translations, it includes 27 books written by possibly 8 different authors over about 50 years' time. The arrangement of these books and their focus is as follows:

1. The four gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John describe the life and ministry of Jesus. "Gospel" means "Good News," and Christians sometimes refer to all four accounts collectively as "the gospel."
2. The book of Acts: describes the history and spread of Christianity.
3. The 21 letters: reveal the early development of church doctrine.
4. The book of Revelation: describes John's vision of the second coming of Christ.⁴

The Old Testament is incomplete without the New. The New Testament cannot be understood without the Old. In order to understand Hebrews, you need a thorough understanding of Exodus and Leviticus. In order to understand John 1, you need Genesis 1.

2. **Read 2 Timothy 3:16. (To find 2 Timothy, you can look in the table of contents or thumb through the pages towards the back of the Bible in the NT.)**

Who wrote the Bible? _____.

3. **Turn a few pages forward and read 2 Peter 1:20-21.**

Fill in the blanks.

For prophecy never had its origin in the _____ of _____, but men spoke from _____ as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Perhaps forty different authors held the pen, but God divinely inspired every word written in the Bible over a 1,500 year period.

Another sign that the Bible is written by God and not man is that people like to make themselves look good. However, in His infinite wisdom, God made sure we saw the weaknesses, vulnerabilities and failures of those who walked with Him. When you study the lives of Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, Paul, Peter, and many other greats in the Bible, you will see they had many disappointing moments. Personally, this is very encouraging!

⁴Excerpts taken from Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Ryrie Study Bible*; Moody Press Chicago 1986

WHY WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN?

4. Read Romans 15:4 out of the New Living Translation version of the Bible.

“Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. They give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God’s promises.”

From Romans 15:4, why was the Bible written?

1 _____ 2 _____

The Bible is our handbook for living. Together with Jesus and the Holy Spirit, it is God’s revelation of Himself to men/women. It is also God’s love letter written to His creation, detailing how to be right with Him – a holy, righteous God. *It was written to teach us* how God handled people and situations in the past so that we would know the direction to take for today. *The Bible was also written to offer us hope and encouragement*, knowing that God is still the same. He never changes. What God did yesterday, He can do today.⁵ I marvel at how an old book can give us such guidance for the present.

5. Read Hebrews 4:12 in the NLT.

“For the Word of God is full of living power. It is sharper than the sharpest knife, cutting deep into our innermost thoughts and desires. It exposes us for what we really are.”

What do you learn about the Bible from this passage of Scripture?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

God’s Word is more than just letters on a page. It’s full of real power. The stories come alive when you apply them to your own life. The Bible is living and active and relevant for our lives today. It was written to guide and direct us. Unlike any other text, the Bible has supernatural effects for those who receive it and apply it by faith. The Bible is meant to invade every facet of our being from our mind, our will, and our emotions all the way to the motives of our heart.

6. Lastly, turn to the center of the Bible. (You should find yourself in the book of Psalms.) Read Psalm 107:19-20.

a. When the people were in distress, Who did they cry out to? _____

b. How did He heal them? _____

Many a day, I come into my Bible reading/prayer time, also known as a quiet time, with pressing needs; decisions to make; directions needed for guidance; hurts or insecurities that run deep; and in need of comfort. As I sit quietly in God’s presence, reading His Word, an answer or an encouragement will oftjump off the page and address whatever it is that I am facing. Peace inevitably washes over me like

⁵ Malachi 3:6 says, that “the Lord never changes.” Hebrews 13:8 says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.”

a warm, soft, cozy blanket. My fears are quieted, my anxieties are eased; I have wisdom for the needed direction. This is what is meant by: *“He sent forth His Word and healed them.”* What I sense the Lord has spoken to my heart, I then record it in the Listening section of my prayer journal. (We will expand more on this in weeks to come.)

7. **In what area of your life do you need healing? (Is it an insecurity, a fear, a problem, a disease, a broken heart, or just practical direction for guidance?)**
8. **Will you cry out to God and allow Him to heal you with His Word, like the Psalmist directs? (Before just saying “yes,” realize that healing comes from spending time with God in His Word. A more accurate question is: Are you willing to invest the time in a relationship with Him so that He can heal you?)**

Dear sister, if you answered yes, prepare to meet your God. Prepare to hear His voice spoken over your life and your circumstances like rain on a parched land.

9. **After reading today’s Scripture passages, has your perception of the Bible changed?**



REVIEW QUESTION

Take a few moments to meditate on our study today.

Were there particular Scripture verses or statements that spoke to you personally?
(Do not feel the need to fill in all answer spaces.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



THIS WEEK'S TREASURE

...

“THESE ARE NOT JUST IDLE
WORDS FOR YOU — [THE BIBLE]
THEY ARE YOUR LIFE.”

DEUTERONOMY 32:46-47

THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD

Yesterday, we studied the truth about the Bible. Today, I want to begin two days learning the truth of who God is.

What/who has shaped your concept of God? (Check all that apply.)

- Preachers/Teachers**
- Self Study**
- Upbringing**
- Family**
- Friends**
- TV or other media**
- Other** _____

I believe many factors shape our concept of God. The way we were raised; the churches we attend; our religious traditions and rituals; what we see and hear through the media and sitcom television; and Oprah herself will readily give you her opinion! But this is the problem. How will we ever know Who God is if we allow others to give us their perception – even in our churches? Do you base what you know about God entirely on what the pastor, priest, or minister says in the pulpit on Sundays?

In the Bible study I referred to yesterday, I was forced to dig into the Bible – to learn what it said for myself. To my surprise, much of what I was learning about Who God is and what He requires — contradicted the world in which I lived and live in now. Sometimes, it even contradicted what I would hear in church on Sunday mornings! (*Scary!*)

Our culture tells us there are many ways to God; that one religion is as good as another; that as long as seekers are sincere in what they do – that is all that matters. Is this true? Is this what Scripture says? Religions and some preachers tell us that you can work your way into God's favor by keeping all the rituals and traditions of religion. Is this true? Is this what Scripture says?

If your answer to the following questions comes from anything other than Scripture, please realize that you may be answering from a version all your own, one peculiar to you alone. This reason alone is why it is so important for us to **learn for ourselves** what the Bible says. Therefore, we'll begin our day by diving into the Scriptures at the very beginning – the beginning of the Bible! Before we begin today's lesson, let's do this one small task:

INTIMACY WITH GOD

Turn in your Journal to the “Renewal” section or take out a blank piece of paper. At the top of the page write something like, “Memorable Verses” or “Favorite Verses.” (You can come up with your own heading.) I often read passages of Scripture that I want to remember, but can’t because I either lose them or forget them. In today’s lesson, and I pray in lessons to come, you will find nuggets of gold tucked away in the passages of Scripture that will speak directly to your heart. Take the time to write these passages down. It will soon become your own personal treasure box – a way to keep the Bible from becoming idle words.

CREATOR

1. **Look at Genesis 1:1 (first book of the Bible). Fill in the blanks.**

In the beginning _____ created the _____ and the _____.

2. **Read Psalm 33:6-9 (flip to the center of the Bible). Fill in the blanks.**

For He _____, and it came to be; He _____, and it stood firm. (v9)

3. **Read Psalm 95:3-5. Fill in the blanks.**

For the LORD is the great _____, the great _____ above all _____. In His hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to _____. The sea is His, for He _____ it, and His hands _____ the dry land.

(Notice in this particular passage that God is King with a capital ‘K’. He is also described as “above all gods” – little ‘g’. Let’s relate this to modern day.)

4. **What are examples of little “gods” that you see in our culture? They are not always statues.**

Anything that comes ahead of your relationship with God can be labeled a “god” or idol. There are many examples of “gods” in modern culture – money, social status, fitness – the gorgeous body, career, material possessions, relationships, spouses, children, “my retirement – my time,” and self, to name just a few. Our gods today are not often represented by statues the way the pagan gods of antiquity were. Do not be fooled.

5. Summarize Deuteronomy 4:19 (back towards the beginning of the Bible).

6. What does this mean to you today?

I have heard people say that God is **in** nature, therefore we should worship the things in nature. However Scripture says that nature **reveals** His splendor and glory. Nature reveals the existence of His holy Being (see Habakkuk 3:4, Isaiah 6:3; Romans 1:20). The created is not the same thing as the Creator. Be careful to not get the two confused.

7. Read Psalm 146:6. Fill in the blanks.

God is the _____ of Heaven and _____, the _____, and everything in them.

8. Read Psalm 147:4. Fill in the blanks.

He determines the number of the _____ and calls them each by _____.
Great is our LORD and mighty in _____; His understanding has no _____.

9. Read Job 38:16 (Job is found before the book of Psalms). Fill in the blanks.

God, Himself has “walked in the _____ of the _____.”

When my children were in kindergarten, they studied oceans. One day they brought home a chart illustrating the four levels of the ocean and the fish/plant life that reside in each area. I found it most fascinating! The chart illustrated that scientists divide the ocean into four zones:

Sunlight zone —Most of the ocean life lives in this zone. It is the only zone that gets full sunlight.

The Twilight Zone – very little sunlight reaches this zone. No plants grow here.

The Dark Zone – this zone gets no sunlight and is dark. Very little ocean life live in this zone.

The Abyss – very few animals live in this deep and dark zone. The water is very, very cold, and there is very little food.

Do you realize that God has walked in the abyss – the deepest part of the sea? Not only has He walked there, but He has created creatures such as the sea spider, rattail, and sea cucumber to live there! How awesome — how amazing is our God!

INTIMACY WITH GOD

Now stop!

10. Go back and slowly read these passages. Ask the Holy Spirit to expand your mind so that you can take it all in! Then answer these questions.

Who created the heavens and the earth? _____
What did He do to make them? _____
To whom does the sea belong? _____
What two things are special about the stars? _____

11. After reading these passages, write one or two words/phrases that describe God.

If you wrote something like: Creator, Almighty God, One True God, etc..., you used words to describe His character, His attributes — words that define who He is.

Webster's dictionary defines "attribute" as a characteristic or quality that defines a person.⁶ In prayer, one of the ways of praising God is by praising Him for who He is – using attributes. Let me give you an example.

"Lord, I praise You as the One true God. You are the Creator of the heavens, the earth, the sea and everything in them. Snow even comes from You, Lord!"

More on this subject in three weeks, however, as we move forward, begin looking at Scripture in this way. Scripture provides us with words we can pray back to God.

ORIGIN OF MAN

13. Read Genesis 1:27. Fill in the blanks.

So _____ created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him;
_____ and _____ He _____ them.

14. Read Genesis 2:7. Fill in the blanks.

The LORD _____ formed the man from the _____ of the
_____ and _____ into his nostrils the breath of
_____, and man became a _____.

⁶ Webster's New World Dictionary, fourth edition, Wiley Publishing, 2003, p42

15. Read Psalm 100:3. Fill in the blanks.

Know that the LORD is _____. It is He who _____ us, and we are _____.

16. Read Psalm 139:13-16.

For _____ [God] created my _____ being; You _____ me together in my _____. (v13) My frame was not hidden from you when I was _____ in the secret place. When I was _____ together in the _____ of the earth, your _____ saw my _____. (v15-16)

There is a huge cultural debate going on right now about creationism vs. evolution. Creationism says that humans were created by God. Evolution (more specifically, “macro-evolution”) suggests not just that life adapts to its environment (which is sound science), but also that human beings were derived from apes (which is NOT sound science.)

17. However, after reading these passages, what does the Bible say?

Man has been distinctively set apart from animals. Man was made in the image of God. It sickens me that our public education system teaches (macro) evolution – which is an affront to human dignity and the antithesis of what the Bible says. If it saddens me, oh, how it must *grieve* God... Lord, have mercy on us.



REVIEW QUESTION

Take a few moments to mediate on our study today.

Were there particular Scripture verses or statements that spoke to you personally? (Do not feel the need to fill in all answer spaces.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

“PRAISE” SECTION OF THE JOURNAL

What new thoughts did you have about God today? Record them!

Open your Journal to the “Praise” section placing a plain sheet of paper behind the tab. Begin by writing today’s date. Under the date, start your list. I’ll give you an example from my list:

Date

You are Creator

You spoke and the earth came to be

You are the great King; the great God!

In Your hand are the depths of the earth...

You are the Maker of heaven, the earth and the sea...

You named the stars...

Your list can be as short or as long as you’d like. Begin your prayer time today by praising God. Use the list you just made to begin.



THIS WEEK'S TREASURE

...

“THESE ARE NOT JUST IDLE
WORDS FOR YOU — [THE BIBLE]
THEY ARE YOUR LIFE.”

DEUTERONOMY 32:46-47

THE TRUTH ABOUT GOD, PART 2

Let's continue our journey to know the truth of Who God is. Today's study is much shorter than yesterday's. Take your time as you study today. It's rich!

Turn to Job 38.

Write one or two things that leave you awestruck after reading the following...

1. Job 38:1-7: _____

2. Job 38:8-11: _____

3. Job 38:12: _____

4. Job 38:16-18: _____

5. Job 38:22-30: _____

6. Job 38:34-35: _____

I could lead you to countless more passages. In the coming weeks, we will continue to grow in our awareness of God's character.

7. Turn to the NT. Read John 1:1-3a. Who is the *Word* referred to in this text?

INTIMACY WITH GOD

- **Take a moment to summarize this passage in your own words:**

8. **Read Colossians 1:15-16. (Found in the NT.)** Who is the *He* referring to?

9. **Read Colossians 1:17. Finish the sentence: “... and in Him all things**

.”

The following passage comes from Anne Graham Lotz’s book, *Just Give Me Jesus*. I marvel at these scientific facts:

Our planet is ninety-three million miles away from the sun. *If* the sun were any closer to the earth, we would burn up. *If* it were any farther away from the earth, we would freeze.

Our planet tilts exactly 23 degrees on its axis, giving us four seasons a year. *If* it tilted at any other angle, we would have massive continents of ice.

The moon is the exact distance from the earth to give us two ocean tides a day. *If* it were any greater or lesser distance, the earth would be flooded.

The ocean floor is at a depth that gives us oxygen, which sustains human life. *If* the depth were any different, the air we breathe would be poisonous.

The atmosphere is the exact density to keep meteors and space objects from hitting us. *If* it were any thinner, we would be constantly bombarded by objects from outer space.

Who keeps all this in perfect order? *Who* keeps Earth from getting sucked into some gigantic black hole, or planets from spinning out of control, or stars from falling from the sky? *Who* keeps people upright on earth while it turns on its axis? The laws of nature? Gravity? And where did gravity come from? *Who* established the laws of nature? *Who* gives people the very air they breathe?

Mrs. Lotz writes that “the answer is none other than the Living Word of Almighty God [Jesus] *Who* was in the beginning with God and *Who* was God and *Who* is the same today. He is bigger than we think and greater than we think. Nothing is beyond His ability. If the Living Word of God has the power to create and sustain the universe, how can you think His power is insufficient for you? He is more than able to sustain your marriage, your faith, your finances, your hope and your health.”⁷

⁷ Anne Graham Lotz, *Just Give Me Jesus*, (Nashville Tennessee, W Publishing Group, a Division of Thomas Nelson, Inc. 2000) pp 11-13.

10. What problem are you facing in this particular season of your life?

When a crisis comes, who do you turn to? Do you pick up the phone to call a friend? Do you complain to your husband? Take it to the One *Who* is able. Turn to Jesus, the One *Whom* has the ability to solve, to fix, to mend, to reconcile any situation you may be facing. The solution to your problem starts by turning to Jesus and saying yes to a relationship with Him.

WHY CAN'T WE JUST HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD?

Isaiah 59:2 says, “*Your iniquities have separated you from your God.*” You see, God is Holy and All Righteous. We cannot come into His presence as sinful human beings. Scripture says, “*...all have sinned and fallen short of His holy standards.*”⁸ It also says that unless blood is shed, there is no forgiveness of sins.⁹

During Old Testament times, prior to Christ’s arrival on earth, animal sacrifices had to be made in order to atone for sin. However, in the New Testament, Christ’s death on Calvary implemented a new covenant. His sacrifice was and is sufficient for the atonement of sins for the whole world. The animal sacrifices are now obsolete. That is why John the Baptist proclaimed that Jesus was the “Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!” (John 1:29)

God loves us so much. He wants so badly to have fellowship with us that He allowed His only Son, who lived a perfect life on planet earth, to die a horrible death, so that through the shedding of Jesus’ blood, our sins could be COMPLETELY removed. In other words, while we cannot come into God’s presence as sinful human beings, HE came into OUR presence.

There are many ways to Jesus, **but there is only one way** to God. It is through Jesus that we get to God. This is where we’ll pick up tomorrow.



REVIEW QUESTION

Take a few moments to meditate on our study today.

Were there particular Scripture verses or statements that spoke to you personally? (Do not feel the need to fill in all answer spaces.)

1.

2.

⁸Romans 3:23

⁹Deuteronomy 12:23

INTIMACY WITH GOD

3.

What new thoughts did you have about God today? Record them in your “Praise” section of your Journal!



THIS WEEK'S TREASURE

...

“THESE ARE NOT JUST IDLE
WORDS FOR YOU — [THE BIBLE]
THEY ARE YOUR LIFE.”

DEUTERONOMY 32:46-47

ARE YOU GOD'S CHILD?

When I was a small child, my neighbor's mom used to drive me home from school. In many of those rides home, she would talk about Jesus. She would tell me that in order for me to go to heaven, I had to invite Him to live in my heart.

One day after riding with her, I went into my room, closed the door and prayed. I told Jesus that I was a sinner and that I wanted Him to come live in my heart. In my naïve mind I thought things would be different when I opened my eyes. I guess I expected to see fireworks! To my disappointment, there were none. Perhaps I had said something wrong...

The next afternoon, I told my friend's mom that I did not think I “did it right.” She offered to pray with me. In believing faith, I repeated her words. Little did I know the significance of such a simple prayer.

1. Read John 14:7, 9b. What is the main point Jesus is making?

Do you want to know what God is like? Look at Jesus.

Do you want to know how God thinks? Look at Jesus.

Do you want to know how to behave in a way that is honoring to God? Look to Jesus.

Jesus is fully God, yet fully man. God has chosen to reveal Himself to us through Jesus. He has chosen to make Himself visible in way that we, as human beings can understand. All we must do in order to know or to understand God is look to Jesus.

John the disciple was an eyewitness to the life of Jesus. Listen to his testimony concerning Jesus. *“**The Word [Jesus] became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.**”* (John 1:14 – underline mine). John was an eyewitness to the life and ministry of Jesus. He wrote an entire book about what he witnessed. Thousands of years later, from generation to generation, it has been preserved for us to read about his eyewitness account. If we want to know the way to heaven and how to be right with God, instead of following popular culture's wisdom of being a good person, being well-intentioned, being sincere in our religious beliefs, and so on, we must know for ourselves first-hand what God has said about being made right with Him. Scripture is the place to look. Why would we go to any other source?

THE WAY TO HEAVEN

2. **Before moving any further, pretend a dear friend of yours is dying of cancer. She was raised in the church, but now she is seeking your council. She wants assurance that she is going to Heaven. What will you tell her?**

3. **Read John 14:6. Fill in the blanks.**

I am the _____, the _____ and the _____. No one comes to the Father _____ through _____.

An alarming trend in our world today is the belief that there are many ways to God; that sincerity of heart is the issue. But according to Scripture, the inerrant Word of God, Jesus is absolutely the only way to God and His heaven. Not one of many ways. Good intentions do not usher us into the Presence of a Holy God. I once asked a minister this very question. Sadly, the answer I received was far different than what the Bible says. The eyewitness, John, records that Jesus is **THE WAY** to Heaven – not **A** way to heaven.

We also have to be careful of the generic “I believe in God” or the “I believe in Jesus therefore I am going to Heaven” theory. Is belief alone enough?

James 2:19 says, “*You believe there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that — and shudder.*”

Stop and think about this for a moment... Dear friend, do not become a victim of the myth that BELIEF in God or Jesus alone will make you a Christian. This is what some in the world tell us and sadly, it’s even what many well-meaning Christians believe.

4. **Read John 10:9.**

- a. **How does Jesus refer to Himself in this text?** _____
b. **What are His words of wisdom in this text?** _____
c. **Does He sound like an evil dictator – making the choice for you? or does He allow you to make the choice on your own?**

5. **Read Matthew 7:13-14.** “*Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction., and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life and only a few find it.*”

In your own words, explain Jesus’ words, keeping John 10:9 in mind.

THE TRUTH

6. Read John 1:12. Who is the “Him” referred to in these verses? _____

What are the two qualifiers to being a child of God?

- 1.
- 2.

God invites us to become His children. He doesn’t want to give us a denomination or a religion. He simply wants to be in relationship with us. According to the Bible, in order for us to become a child of God, we must **believe** and **receive Jesus**.

7. Read John 3:3. Fill in the blanks. “*I tell you the truth, _____ can see the kingdom of God unless he is _____.*”

When we believe and receive Jesus into our lives the Bible says that we have been born again! But please know that Jesus is a Gentleman. He will not barge into your life [heart] unless He has been invited. When Jesus comes into our heart, the Bible says we have been saved from hell and are now born again, thus assured of Heaven! (*John 14:6*)

Though we are still imperfect beings, we are a new creation¹⁰ because when we accept Jesus into our hearts, He sends His Holy Spirit to live within us.¹¹ Through His help, we make better decisions and are able to live righteously. He gives us discernment to know right from wrong according to God’s standards rather than our ever-changing culture. He also gives us the power to live our lives according to His righteous standards.

Do you have a difficult time understanding Scripture? The Holy Spirit helps us to understand the Bible.¹² Without the Holy Spirit helping us to interpret what we are reading, the words have minimal impact. So the question is, are you a child of God? Have you invited Jesus into your life? If you have not, you do not have the Holy Spirit living within you. Take a moment to think through the following question.

8. **Can you remember when you made the *deliberate decision* to open the door of your heart to Jesus? I shared my story at the opening of our day today.**

If you cannot remember or you are not sure if you have made the deliberate decision to open your heart to Jesus, know that God is inviting you to become a member of His family. It’s a choice — a decision you have to make. It’s the most important decision you will ever make – even more important than your decision to marry. Your choice to receive or reject God’s invitation to become part of His family will determine where you will spend eternity. Do not ignore, resist, or procrastinate this decision.

¹⁰ 2 Corinthians 5:17

¹¹ Ephesians 1:13-14

¹² John 14:26

INTIMACY WITH GOD

The Bible talks about the children of God, but **never** the grandchildren of God. He has no grandchildren. You cannot know Him through someone else's relationship such as your mother, friend or teacher.

You must know Him for yourself. Anyone and everyone can know God in a personal relationship when we confess that we are sinners, ask God to forgive us, ask His Son, Jesus, to be our Savior, and surrender our lives to Him. You can pray a prayer like this:

Dear Jesus, I know I am a sinner. I believe You died for my sins. Right now, I turn from my sins and open the door of my heart and life. I want You to be my personal Lord and Savior. Thank you for saving me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

If you have prayed today in simple believing faith, you are now a child of God! A daughter of the King; a princess; and adopted into the Royal family! Write today's date on this line: _____ . It is your spiritual birthday!

Be sure to share with others this profound decision you have made!



REVIEW QUESTION

Take a few moments to meditate on our study today.

Were there particular Scripture verses or statements that spoke to you personally? (Do not feel the need to fill in all answer spaces.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

“PRAISE” SECTION OF THE JOURNAL

What new thoughts did you have about God today? Record them!

REVIEW

The Bible tells us to be doers of the Word, not just readers (see James 1:22). We are not meant to go through the motions of Bible study and not be changed or different from what we've studied. This Review day, just as each daily review question, encourages application of what we've studied.

What was the most meaningful or significant lesson you learned from each day?

Day 1: _____

Day 2: _____

Day 3: _____

Day 4: _____

1. What new thoughts have you had about God this week?

2. Was there a Scripture verse that was especially meaningful?



A LOVE
RELATIONSHIP
WITH JESUS

WEEK TWO

Day 1| The God Who Sees Me

Day 2| Created for Love Relationship

Day 3| The *Approachable God*

Day 4| Having a Quiet Time

Day 5| Review

