

KNOWING GOD



A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE



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INTRODUCTION

The most beautiful love story ever written is God's story with people. This story is described in a library of books, written by several writers about God, over thousands of years. And this library of books, the Bible has existed for thousands of years and is still being read by billions of people.

The Bible describes the heart of God for His people, which He created in His image. This amazingly wonderful God reveals Himself to His people over the ages so that we can understand something of the very nature of God and who He really is.

Where does someone begin to discover and write something about this great God? Simply, at the beginning. At the first chapter of this great Book. By just reading the first sentence one discovers so much of God. "In the beginningGod created." No one gave him a command, He creates, just because He can, just because He is God. And when He creates, He creates with precision. Everything perfectly in harmony.

In the rest of the Bible He reveals who He is. We learn to know Him as the almighty, omnipresent, all-knowing God,

who reigns in His great love and grace as a holy, righteous and sovereign God.

Never ever can anyone describe who God really is, because He is much more and much larger than even the Bible describe Him.

We believe that we will discover something of God in this year, therefore open your heart to God so that you can develop a heart for God. We believe as we develop a heart for God and discover more about God, that we will discover that God has a heart for people and that He wants us to have His heart for people.

We believe this series of four Bible studies, of which this one is the first, will enrich your life and change it forever.

Soli Deo Gloria!!!
To God alone all the glory!!!

KNOWING GOD

Week **1**

Creator God

Memory verse:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1



A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE



Day 1:

How did we get here?

Begin today's study with prayer.

If you have not read the introduction, please read it before you start reading the rest of this Bible study.

We live in a world in which the theory of evolution has become the "theology" of evolution. People believe it blindly without asking questions about it. Other people say that they believe in a being that created and they call it "the intelligent design." The Bible goes far beyond presenting God as the Intelligent Designer. He is God, who creates, with a purpose.

Read Genesis 1:1-3, Job 38:4-10 and Job.38:31-33.

Write down your thoughts and emotions after you read these verses.

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The Bible teaches that God created everything visible and invisible from nothing. This means that before God created there was nothing except God. God is eternal,

and every other created thing has a beginning. The eternal God reigns over all His creation and He alone is worthy of worship. He created with a purpose.

If you know that and believe it, for what purpose do you think God created?

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Read Psalm 33:6-9

Write down your thoughts regarding God, the creation and yourself.

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Read Psalm 139:13-17

You were also created by God. Write down a few things that you can praise God for.

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An amazing God, created you in an amazing way. Be ready for the discovery of your life.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

God created everything good!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Genesis 1:3-13

What do you learn regarding God in this passage? How did God create?

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God did not just create everything, but God created everything good. God created everything perfect, without any faults or mistakes. He makes it pleasant to look at and to enjoy. Just look at the next beautiful sunset.

God simply creates through His almighty and Divine power by saying, "Let there be." And there was. Wonderful, Great, Creator God at His best! God thinks, He plans and then creates according to a certain order.

In the first three days of creation, God worked with the formlessness of the universe. He sets the boundaries and organizes the universe so that it can handle our galaxy.

Read Genesis 1:14-25

After God transformed the formless universe and laid His heavenly rules, God filled the emptiness of the universe with the sun, the moon and the stars. Only when it is ready for life He creates the rest, plants, animals and man. A God, fully in control.

Read Psalm 19:1

Why did God create?

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Even creation tells about the awesomeness of God. Day and night creation worships God.

In what ways do you experience the greatness of God, by looking at His creation?

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End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 3:

Created by the Son for the Son

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:15-17 and Hebrews 1:10-12

Read these verses carefully again. What thoughts and emotions are going through your mind? Write it down. Think again about the role of Jesus in creation. If you want to, worship and praise Him now as your Saviour and Creator!

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We meet the Triune God in the first verses of the Bible. We read in Genesis 1 verse 2 that the Holy Spirit hovered over the earth and in verse 3 that God said, "Let there be light ..." and now we see how the light and all the others were well-established - by the Light, the Son!! Every time God speaks, the Son brings it into being. He does not only create it, He also keeps it.

Read 1 Corinthians 8:5-6 and Ephesians 2:10

Listen to how the New International Version (1984) translates it: *“We are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Do you ever think of you as the product of God’s workmanship? Just think about how humans are put together. Write your thought down and ponder a little about your thoughts and about God.

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Jesus is the source, the origin of man. We are here according to the great plan of God, made and purchased by Jesus. But He did not only create man, it is written here her created *all things*, according to His plan, to the glory of God.

If you can, listen to the song of Chris Tomlin, *How great is our God*.

Close today’s study in worship.



Day 4:

Created in His image!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Genesis 1:26-28 and Hebrews 2:5-8

Read these verses again. What characteristics distinguishes the human being from every other created being? Write down your thoughts and emotions about God and who man is?

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To be the exact representation of someone or to be created in someone's image, means that there should be some sort of a relationship. Our children carry our image not only because they carry our DNA, but because they grow up in a relationship with us.

All other things in creation, even the animals are created just by speaking of a word. Man is different, man is created, with God's hands, he or she is special.

Read Genesis 2:7 and 20-22

Do you see the different methods God used by creating man and woman? What are these different methods? Write it down. Why do you think these differences are there? How does society treat the differences? Read Genesis 2:18 to make it clearer.

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Men are formed from the dust of the earth and women are formed with great care from the man. After that, every other person will be formed by a man's seed in the woman. Perfect Divine Harmony and Plan!!

Read Genesis 1:28 again.

What command did God give to man? What does it mean to you practically?

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God creates man as his representative on earth to rule over everything in creation. As His representative, we should reflect God's image in the world.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 5:

Creation and all creatures glorify God

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Isaiah 43:6-7

Think carefully. Why are you here? What is your purpose in life?

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No other creature in creation has the ability to glorify God because only people are made after the image of God. Yet the Bible says that even the stones will cry out if we do not honour God. God made us to live close to Him, if we experience His closeness, then we are naturally responding to worshipping Him and praising His attributes.

Read Psalm 86:8-13

What does it mean to glorify and honour God? How do you think of doing it regularly from now on?

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God is glorified and honoured by our actions, through what we say and by what we think. To glorify God is to acknowledge God and to show it to others. This means you live a life of gratitude and trust. God becomes glorified if you show your love to God by living in obedience to Him and His Word.

Read John 10:10 and Psalm 16:8-11

What do you learn from these verses about your purpose?

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C.S. Lewis said that if God instructs us to glorify Him, it is an invitation to enjoy Him. God is most glorified if we are satisfied with Him. Live a life full of joy and peace, it makes God happy.

Read Zephaniah 3: 17-18 and Isaiah 62: 5

God is good!! Close today's study with praise and worship. Listen to a worship song. Songs like Breathe, Draw me Close and many others will help us to worship God.



GROUP STUDY:

Prayer

Memory verse:

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Genesis 1:3-13, 1:26-28 and Hebrews 2:5-8.

Discussion questions

God created everything good. What does it mean that everything is good and what impact does it have on you?

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What does it mean to you that God made you in His image? In what way does it differentiate you from all other creatures?

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What role does Jesus play in creation? Read John 1: 1-3, Colossians 1: 15-17 and Hebrews 1: 10-12. Why do you think God created through Jesus?

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Why are you here? Read Isaiah 43: 6-7, Psalm 86: 8-13 and Psalm 16: 8-11.

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Close in prayer

KNOWING GOD

Week **2**

God is All-knowing

Memory verse:

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

“Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?” For from him and through him and for him are all things.

Romans 11:33-36



Day 1:

Omniscient

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Job 37:16; Isaiah 44:6-8

What does Job mean with the words: “him who has perfect knowledge”?

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When the Bible teaches us that God is omniscient – that means that He has complete knowledge – it is not saying that God is intelligent or a genius. To say that would be to limit God to our own limited idea of space and time.

The Bible means that God knows everything. No dilemma can confuse Him; no question can be too difficult; nothing can surprise Him. He has absolute, eternal, intrinsic and comprehensive perfect knowledge.

Read Isaiah 44:6-8.

What does these verses teach us about the all-knowing God?

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When we say God is omniscient, we mean that He knows all that there is to know. God neither studies nor learns for you cannot increase a knowledge that is already insurmountable. Probability does not exist for God; all things either are or are not in His perspective. There is no maybe. There is one reality and God knows it in its entirety, as it exists by, through and for Him.

God has all wisdom. He works everything out for the good of his people and for the display and enjoyment of his glory. Even when things seem the worst, God is carrying out his perfect wisdom. He never fails, He knows all and plans all.

This is not only true for everything and everybody in the world; it is also true for you and me. That means that there is not a single thought, act or word that has slipped out of your being that has escaped the full attention of God.

The fact that God is all-knowing (omniscient) may scare you or make you uneasy, but it can also comfort you.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

God is God, I am not!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Romans 11:33-36

One of the most important lessons that we all need to learn is that God is God and I am not God. That sounds obvious, but we challenge it every time we think that God owes us something or that He is not treating us as well as we think we deserve. We act against it every time we sin. We violate the truth of it every time we grumble about our circumstances.

Re-read each of the verses in Romans 11 and write down what it means to you:

Verse 33	
Verse 34	
Verse 35	

Verse 36	
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God is far greater than you can ever comprehend. This means:

- God’s riches are beyond comprehension.
- God’s wisdom is beyond comprehension.
- God’s knowledge is beyond comprehension.
- God’s judgments are beyond comprehension.
- God’s ways are beyond comprehension.

How does these facts influence your understanding of God?

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God’s total knowledge of you is both frightening and comforting. Which aspect is truer for you? Why?

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End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 3:

God guides

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 23, Jeremiah 29:11 and Psalm 121:2-5,8

What are some of the characteristics of a shepherd listed in Psalm 23?

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The picture here is of the shepherd, who spends night and day with his sheep. He is leading them, guiding them and guarding them. He knows them intimately, cares for them deeply and knows exactly where he is leading them; namely to green pastures. To get there he must often take them through rough terrain, but he protects them along the way. Although the sheep don't know where he is taking them, his plans for them are good. (Read Jeremiah 29:11)

Read Psalm 121:2-5,8.

How have you experienced the guidance of the Lord in your life?

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Do you find it easy to follow the guidance of the Lord, even if you do not see the result? If not, how can you keep yourself submitted to God's will for your life?

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God is infinitely wise and all-knowing. His knowledge is universal and perfect. Unless we can fully embrace this attribute of God, we will have difficulty in trusting Him to guide us. We will be unsure and will become victims of our circumstances.

If we are not led by God, we will be led by something else. When we allow God to guide our lives, we have a sense of purpose, mission and destiny.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 4:

Bad news: God knows!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 139: 1-6, 14-18, 23-24; Hebrews 4:13; 1 John 3:20 and Ezekiel 11:5

Psalm 139 teaches us that God knew us long before we were born. He was actively involved with our creation and is actively involved in our lives.

What do the following verses teach us about the all-knowing God?

Hebrews 4:13	
1 John 3:20	
Ezekiel 11:5	

If you accept that God knows everything, it means that He also knows everything about you. There is not a single thought you have, action you plan or word that you say, that God does not know. It is a bit of a mixed blessing, because nothing escapes His undivided attention and you cannot hide anything from Him – not even your sin.

How does this knowledge make you feel and think about your sins?

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It is a sobering thought, because we cannot pretend that we are without sin. It is not as if we can try to hide our sin to prevent God from finding out about it, He already knows we are all guilty. Therefore, the only thing left to do is to confess and ask for His forgiveness.

Take time to talk to Father about your sins, and ask for His forgiveness.



Day 5:

Good news: God knows!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 147:5; Psalm 56:8 and Romans 8:38-39

God knows about our sins, but He also knows about our scars. Every person is wounded in some way; some have scars of past hurt, some have open wounds that is still bleeding. The good news is that God knows all about that.

What does the following verses teach us about the all-knowing God?

Psalm 147:5	
Psalm 56:8	

In Ancient Middle Eastern culture, when a soldier went off to battle, he would buy a “tear vial” – a little tear bottle – and he would give it to his wife or his mother. She would

promise that during his absence she would cry every day and would collect the tears in the bottle, so that when he returns it will be proof of how special he is to her.

God is never careless with your pain or wounds. He knows every tear that falls – he not only knows about the tears, but He writes it in a book.

What comfort does Romans 8:38-39 provide in times of hardship?

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God knows all about our hardship and wounds and tears. We never need to cry alone. There is always someone who knows and someone who cares.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



GROUP DISCUSSION:

Prayer

Memory Verse:

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out!

“Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?” For from him and through him and for him are all things.

Romans 11:33-36

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Romans 11:33-36; Hebrews 4:13; Hebrews 10:20 and 1 John 3:20

Discussion Questions

What does the fact that God is omniscient (all-knowing) mean to you? Discuss in the group.

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Read Romans 11:33-36 again, what does it teach us about God and His wisdom?

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Read Hebrews 4:13. In what way does it affect your thinking about your own life and struggles? Read Hebrews 10:20. Discuss the importance of a clear conscience.

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Read 1 John 3:20. Discuss the current situation of the world we live in – do you think the fact that God is all-knowing, makes a difference in the way people live their daily lives?

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Close in prayer

KNOWING GOD

Week **3**

God is All-powerful

memory verse:

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 1:18-19a



A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE



Day 1:

All-powerful God!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Ephesians 1:18-23

Write down all the thoughts about God in this section.

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What does omnipotent (all-powerful) God means to you?

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Theologian Henry Thiessen describes God's omnipotence beautifully. He says the following: *“God is all-powerful and able to do whatever he wills. Since his will is limited by his nature, God can do everything that is in harmony with his perfections.”* In other words, God can do anything that is in line with His nature and His other attributes. There are things that God can not do, for example, He can not sin or lie. It's beyond His nature, but

it does not limit God's omnipotence. God's omnipotence is part of His being, so He does it effortlessly. God is self-sufficient. He does not need someone or something to restore his powers.

Read Psalm 62:11-12.

How do you understand these verses? Write down below your thoughts and emotions.

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How many times have you spoken and no one listens. When God speaks creation listens, because just by a word everything was formed. Nothing is too difficult for God, we never ever have to fear. Nothing can limit God's power. We can fully trust him. God can provide in any need, no sin is too great to forgive, no temptation is too great to save us from. No sadness is too great for Him to comfort us.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

God's saving power

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Romans 1:16-23

Salvation is not a human decision, why is it important that we were saved by the power of God? How would you describe the saving power of God?

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One of the greatest secrets of life is why God allows evil. We will never get the answer. We know that in His omnipotence God will overcome evil. Every injustice will be rectified by God. People who die without God will account for every act of sin and rebellion, but the miracle of God is that He has the ability to forgive sin and to save sinners.

Read Ephesians 2:1-11

Think carefully about what is written here. What does this passage mean for your everyday life?

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It is important to see that salvation does not depend on a human decision, but that salvation can only happen through divine power. It asks God to implant new life into a dead sinner. It's something that's impossible for people to do.

Read Ephesians 1:18-21 carefully.

Once we realize what God has done for us, we can only worship Him. People often wonder where to start to worship God? It starts with your attitude. Once we realize who God is, we can only stand in awe of God. As long as we think too much of ourselves and our abilities, it is difficult to worship God.

End today's study by reading Ephesians 3:20-21 and worshiping God.



Day 3:

God's omnipotence in creation

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 89:5-10

Describe God's omnipotence according to this passage.

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Before anyone can create something, he or she needs materials and tools. God started with nothing. God spoke and it was! No one told God to create, He creates because He can. Creation is a witness that God is omnipotent.

Read Psalm 89:11-14

What do you learn about God in these verse?

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Looking at the stars in the evening, be amazed at the creation of God. In His omnipotence, it was created without anything in His hands. How is it possible that everything in creation is in exact harmony? This is evidenced by an almighty great God. Just think about your own body. The functioning of your skin, with billions of sensors, your ears, your eyes, and the functioning of all the organs in harmony with each other. It is only possible because an almighty, all-powerful God formed it perfectly with His hands.

Read Psalm 89:15-16

How should we react when we realize God is all-powerful?

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Praise Him Now. Listen to a song or read a psalm. (Psalm 146-150). Then close with a prayer of praise!



Day 4:

Almighty God holds all things together

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Job 8:8-19 and Hebrews 1:3a

God holds all things together. Describe your emotions and thoughts as you read these passages. Carefully read it again.

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No creature has the ability to be self-sustaining. Nothing or no one will last forever, except God. Nothing can exist without the provision of God. It is God who fills the earth with oxygen and water so that there can be natural life. God maintains this earth in His great power.

God's provision begins before the birth of man and animal. At the time of creation, He has already ensured that humans and animals are safely protected and fed in the womb. Just think of a baby for a moment. In a small space like the womb, it survives in unhygienic conditions that is a miracle of God.

Read Job 38:8-15

What do you learn about God's power to sustain nature?

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God maintains the earth by setting boundaries to the waters. The sea is for the most part limited to its borders. By doing so, God ensures that the earth is safe and He maintains His creation.

Read Job 39:1-11

To the finest detail, God has planned the earth and everything on it, and in the greatest detail, He maintains it and cares for the animals.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 5:

Powerless man

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Job 26:5-14

What do you learn about God? Describe your thoughts and emotions.

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Which person has the ability to make something that God has made? With whom can God be compared? Even if people could make the most wonderful things, it could not be compared to what God had made just by the speaking of a word. Just think of God's omnipotence and power in nature. Just think how powerless we are against fire and wind and water. And even if we see God's omnipotence and power in nature, it is still only part of who God is and what He is capable of.

Read Habakuk 3:1-16

How do you understand this passage? Write a short summary in your own words.

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God's omnipotence is so incomprehensibly big, so immeasurable, so unmanageable that we can only but tremble at the greatness of God.

To treat God with disrespect is not just madness, it is actually spiritual suicide. God is powerful to save and to cast those who choose against Him in eternal hell. Why then shall we want to revolt against this mighty God? If we only realize for a moment who God is and with whom we have to do, we shall not be able not to worship and honour Him.

Close today's study by reading Psalm 2:11-12. Thank God for His greatness and mercy. Confess to God our powerlessness without Him. Worship Him and give yourself to Him again.



GROUP DISCUSSION:

Prayer

Memory verse:

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.

Ephesians 1:18-19a

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Mark 4:35-41

Discussion questions

Imagine that you were one of the disciples on the boat. How would you feel during the storm? What do you learn about God's power from this passage? And how are you going to apply it to your everyday life?

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Read Philippians 4:13. How do we live in God's power? How does it help you in your everyday life?

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Read Ephesians 1:18-23 and Ephesians 3:16-17. What does God teach you about His power? How should we respond?

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Close by reading Job 42:1-6 and Ephesians 3:20-21. Give opportunity to praise God for His power in your life.

KNOWING GOD

Week **4**

God is All-present

memory verse:

The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

Proverbs 15:3



A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE



Day 1:

Omnipresence = All (ever) present

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Acts 7:48-49; Proverbs 15:3; 1 Kings 8:27 and Jeremiah 23:23-24

One of the attributes of God is His omnipresence. This means that He is everywhere all the time.

What does these verses teach us about where God lives and His presence?

Acts 7:48-49	
Proverbs 15:3	
1 Kings 8:27	
Jeremiah 23:23-24	

God's omnipresence speaks of the fact that He is present in all places and at all times. While God is in Heaven, (on His throne) He is also present everywhere else. His eyes are everywhere and He is close at hand. No one can hide himself from God.

God is present everywhere in the fullness of His being. This allows Him to interact in any place at any time (even in multiple places simultaneously). As He is present in all locations with the whole of His being, there is no place we can go and not be in His presence.

This is a very difficult concept to understand. God is Spirit, which means that, technically, He doesn't dwell in three-dimensional space as we do. God is no less present in one portion of the universe than in any other. And He is no more present anywhere in the universe than where you are right now.

Take time to acknowledge that God is present where you are right now, and talk to Him, your Father.



Day 2:

Present everywhere

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 139:1-18

Why is the omnipresence of God so significant?

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The fact that God is omnipresent, means that we can never be out of the sight of God. God is everywhere, all the time.

Read Psalm 139:7-12 again and give a description, in your own words, of what the following verses mean to you regarding the omnipresence of God:

Verse 7	
Verse 8	

Verses 9-10	
Verses 11-12	

God's omnipresence means that He is close to us. He wants to have an intimate relationship with us, and is always present – in every conversation, every relationship, every seemingly meaningless activity and in every solitary moment.

There is no reason for us to ever be alone – God is right there, beside you. Put your hand in His, and continue the journey of life in the presence of God

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 3:

You can't hide from God

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Jeremiah 23: 23-24; Jonah 1:1-16

Jeremiah says that God is close at hand and that no one can hide himself from God. Think about a time that you have tried to hide from God – did it work? Why not?

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Read Jonah 1:1-16. Describe what happened in this passage in your own words,

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This passage is a clear illustration of the fact that we cannot hide or run away from God – He is ever-present. Jonah thought he could get away, but God send a storm to stop him.

In the same way (as recorded in 2 Samuel) King David thought he could get away with his sin with Bathsheba and Moses thought he could get away with killing an Egyptian (as recorded in Exodus 2:11-22).

That is what happens when we live without the conscious awareness of the presence of God. We relegate God to Sundays and church and we think He does not see or accompany us during the week.

D.L. Moody said, “*Character is what a person is in the dark.*” Dark and light are alike to God. He’s on the scene. God is ever-present, and He holds us accountable for our decisions and actions – not to accuse us, but to improve our lives.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 4:

You are not alone!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 34:15-20; Daniel 3:16-25

Once we get over the realization that we are never out of the sight of God, joy overflows our lives. Because this means that we are never alone! God is so remarkable and loves me so much, that I am never out of His sight. Even at times when I feel all alone and am at the end of my hope and endurance – God is there with me.

What does Psalm 34:15-20 teach us about times of pain, struggle and hopelessness?

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Read Daniel 3:16-25. What does this passage teach us about the presence of God in times of trouble?

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What was the attitude of the three young men?

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As believers we never have to face hardship without also feeling God's presence. His presence is warm and inviting and reassuring. If you are a believer, you have an ever-present friend – He will be with you every step of the way.

God is reaching out His fatherly hand to each of us – if you put your hand in His, He will never let go.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 5:

Present through His Spirit and His Word.

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 1:2-3; John 14:16-17, 26; and John 15:4-8

One of the most pressing questions for believers is: “How do I experience the presence of God?” You cannot hide from God and God never hides from any of us. But because it is not easy to understand and grasp the concept of God’s omnipresence, God teaches us that He is present through His Spirit and His Word.

What does each of these verses teach us about the presence of God?

Psalm 1:1-2	
John 14:16-17,26	
John 15:4-5	

God is always with us, but we need to make a conscious decision to believe it. Therefore, we need to study God's Word and to make it part of our daily lives. God send His Spirit to dwell in each of us – therefore He is always present. We have no reason to think that we are ever alone, or that we can escape from God. The fact that we cannot see Him, does not mean He is not present.

Read John 15:7-8. What does these verses teach us about talking to God?

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Once you realize that God is always present, you can talk to Him freely. You can tell Him exactly what is going on in your life, because He knows it already.

The gospel singer, Lizbé Visser, once said that while she was struggling after an accident, she really wished that God had a body, because she needed Him to give her a hug. After talking to Father about her feelings, she realised that He has a body on earth, His children. What an amazing calling that is for us as believers. Because God, through His Spirit, is living in each of us, we are His representatives on earth.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



GROUP DISCUSSION:

Prayer

Memory verse:

The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.

Proverbs 15:3

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Psalm 139:1-17

Discussion questions

What does the fact that God is omnipresent (all-present) mean to you? Discuss in the group.

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Read verse 7 to 13 again and discuss the all-presence of God as described in each verse.

Verse 7	
Verse 8	
Verse 9-10	
Verses 11-12	
Verse 13	

How does the knowledge that God is always present, influence your way of life and actions?

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Close in prayer

KNOWING GOD

Week **5**

God is sovereign

memory verse:

I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

Isaiah 46:9b-10





Day 1:

Sovereign God

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

What comes to mind when you hear the word
“sovereign”?

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The Webster dictionary defines the word as *“having
supreme rank, power, or authority; preeminent; being
above all others in character, importance, excellence”*

Think again. What comes to mind when you hear the
words “sovereign God”?

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The sovereignty of God can be defined as God who
implements His omnipotence. He is above everyone and
everything. He is the Lord of heaven and earth and is not
subordinate to anyone and is not influenced by anyone.
He is independent and does as He knows is best. He will
always do His will!!

Read Isaiah 46: 9-10 and Daniel 4: 34-35

Read these passages again. What emotions or thoughts are coming up in your mind? Write down your emotions and thoughts about God.

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Society has the tendency to try and explain the sovereignty of God with words such as fate or luck of chance. God is the ruler of all things. Let's be honest, the concept of God's sovereignty is often difficult to understand.

Read Psalm 24:1-10

Write down your emotions and thoughts about God.

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The heavenly King's awesome splendour and majesty are almost indescribable. In comparison to Him, every other ruler or government is just a dot on the radar screen of the universe and eternity. No ceremony or crown jewels or wealth will make Him more royal. He is the sovereign, Divine King sitting on a throne far above the universe in heaven.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

Sovereign God in control

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Daniel 2: 20-22

What emotions or thoughts come to mind? Write down your emotions and thoughts about God.

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God rules His creation, so we can not question any of His actions. Whatever God wants will happen. God was able to create because He was and is in absolute control of every particle of material even before He accomplished it. And after He created, He is still in absolute control.

Read Isaiah 45:5-8 and Job 37:5-13

How do you feel about the fact that God is sovereign? Does it scare you? Why or why not?

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When God is in control, we are not. It may cause people to be scared, but it actually brings a lot of comfort. How much better that our almighty, all-knowing God has every circumstance under control, than we who are imperfect and limited. Trust God today by placing your situation in the hands of your loving Father. We are part of a sovereign God's eternal plan! You can further God's plan on earth if you realize your full potential and live in obedience to Him.

God is either sovereign or He is not. What are the consequences for our lives if He is not?

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The fact that God is completely sovereign in all His ways means that we all have a chance to go to Him and to get possible answers to some of our personal prayer requests. If He was not sovereign and in control, we have no one to go to. Because He is a sovereign God, who is in control, we can pray in boldness.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 3:

Man versus a sovereign God

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Matthew 20: 1-16

What emotions and thoughts come to mind when you read this passage. Write your thoughts and emotions below.

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Through the centuries, people want to prescribe to God what to do and how to do it. Unbelievers hate the sovereignty of God. They do not want God or the Bible or Christians to prescribe to them. They want to live as they like. By contrast, Christians should be content to live obedient to God and His will because they know and believe He is Lord of all.

How do you honestly deal with God's rule over your life? Is He Lord over everything? If not, what parts of your life do you or the devil rules over? What do you think should happen in order for God's will to touch your will?

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God is the sovereign God and the Lord over everything in our lives. He has control over every breath and heartbeat in our lives. It will be foolish not to make him Lord of our life. We are God's masterpiece. He recreated us in Christ Jesus so that we can do and experience the good things He has planned for us long ago. We are part of the sovereign God's eternal plan. You can only enhance God's plans on earth if you realize your full potential and obey Him. Pursue the good things that God has planned for you today.

Do you know others who need to be reminded that God is in control? How will you approach them to encourage them with the fact that God is in control?

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Comfort them with the fact that our sovereign Lord is in control and rules over every circumstance.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 4:

Your will Lord

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 115:1-13

What thoughts and emotions do you experience while reading this Psalm? Write down your emotions and thoughts.

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There is a perfect harmony between the sovereignty of God and man. Bill Bright writes that for us to be submissive to God's will is to understand that we are one piece in a billion-piece puzzle. This one piece of the puzzle must fit somewhere in God's plan for the universe. You must try to fit in God's perfect picture without having seen the photo on the outside of the box. Without God you will run around your whole life in search of your place. If you ask God to guide you, He will help you to find your place in His perfect will. He is not just big enough to see the big picture, He created it.

Do we have no say in our lives? Think about this question? No matter if your answer is yes or no, give reasons for your answer.

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Read Isaiah 46:9-10

God does not regard us as his puppets or slaves. He gave us free will and emotion. He will never force His plans on us in a loveless way. In light of His plans for us and the world, He gives us free choice. God, however, has a plan for the world and He will eventually reach His master plan for the world. He allows us to freely choose and if we choose against Him, He will never abandon His plans. God makes history, not us.

Ask God to help you to restore His sovereign will in your life and give yourself over in perfect obedience to His will by saying, “because God is sovereign, I will joyfully submit to His will.”

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 5:

My will

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Genesis 3:1-13

How do you feel when you read this passage? Describe your feelings below.

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Read Isaiah 45:9-12

How do you understand this passage and what do you learn about God and His sovereign will?

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God is under no obligation or law. Who is man to question God? So many believers simply follow their own head and ways. Nevertheless, despite human actions and response to His sovereign will, He still chooses to make His own Son a sinner so that people who want to

follow their own sinful paths will have an opportunity to repent and become new.

Read Romans 8:28

Do you believe it? What is the opposite of it? Do you think God could even use bad circumstances to fulfil His will?

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God created a perfect world, but man chose to sin, and the consequences of sin were physical and spiritual death. All the bad things that exist are due to the fact that we live in a sinful world.

God does not cause sin, nor command people to sin. He does not tempt man to sin or to do evil. Yet, in his goodness, He uses bad things for His good purpose. Our disappointments are often God's appointments with us. He is much more concerned about our eternal future than He is concerned about our current comfort. He uses problems and suffering to shape us into the image of Jesus Christ.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



GROUP DISCUSSIONS:

Prayer

Memory verse:

I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

Isaiah 46:9b-10

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Isaiah 46: 9-10, Daniel 4: 34-35, Isaiah 45:5-8 and Job 37:5-13

Discussion questions

What is the most important thing you have learned this week about God’s sovereignty?

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Why do you think it is so hard for many people to accept a sovereign God?

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What do people mean when they say that Jesus Christ is their Saviour and Lord? What do you mean when you say He is your Lord?

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Are you willing to say to God, “Use my life to further Your plan?” If yes, how are you willing to submit to Him? If no, why not?

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Close in prayer

KNOWING GOD

Week **6**

God is Righteous

Memory verse:

God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?

Numbers 23:19



A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE



Day 1:

The meaning of Righteousness

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Numbers 23:19; Psalm 7:11; Psalm 97:2 and Psalm 119:137-138

The Righteousness of God is one of the most prominent attributes of God in the Scripture, but is also one of the most elusive to understand. It is often difficult to distinguish between God's holiness or His goodness and His righteousness.

Read the following verses and write in your own words what it teaches you about righteousness:

Numbers 23:19	
Psalm 7:11	
Psalm 97:2	
Psalm 119: 137-138	

The Hebrew word for righteousness means to be straight. It is being true, truthful, honest, authentic, honourable, blameless and true to your word.

What does these words teach you about your own ability to be righteous?

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Righteousness is like goodness and holiness, but differs in that it requires works to establish it. Something (someone) can be holy, but not righteous if good works do not accompany it. God is good, but He refers to Himself as righteous because He does good works as well.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

God is Righteous

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 11:7, Psalm 111:3, Psalm 119:137-138, Psalm 145:17 and Malachi 3:5-6

So many passages in the Bible call God righteous. Read the following verses carefully and rewrite them in your own words:

Psalm 11:7	
Psalm 111:3	
Psalm 119:137	
Psalm 119:138	
Psalm 145:17	

Righteousness does not only define God, God defines righteousness. God Himself is the standard for righteousness and all His laws are righteous.

Read the following verses and describe what it teaches you about God’s eternal righteousness:

Malachi 3:5	
Malachi 3:6	

Righteousness is the character of God in action: it is revealed through the perfect integrity of His character and actions. His righteousness will last forever.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 3:

God's justice is Righteous

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 7:11-18, Psalm 51:4, Jeremiah 11:20 and Genesis 18: 16-33.

The righteousness of God is synonymous with His justice. When we say that God is just, we are saying that He always does what is right. God's actions are always right and fair and therefore righteous.

Read the following verses and describe in your own words what it teaches about God's justice.

Psalm 7:11-18	
Psalm 51:4	
Jeremiah 11:20	

AW Tozer once said that nothing can move God to act outside of His nature. God’s reasons for acting just comes from within Himself and the righteousness of God is evident in the way He has acted through all time.

The righteousness of God is introduced very early on in the Bible.

Read Genesis 18:16-33.

What does this passage teach us about God’s relationship with Adam and God’s justice?

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God is righteous – therefore, in His justice, He does not punish the righteous people while dealing with the wicked. God exercises His righteousness to punish evil, clear the innocent and He forgives the penitent.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 4:

God's Righteousness compared to ours

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 51:1-6

Yesterday we heard God exercises His righteousness to punish evil (morality), clear the innocent (judgement) and to forgive the penitent (relational). What does Psalm 51:6 teach us about moral integrity?

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Moral integrity is to know what is right and to act accordingly. It means that we have values that we refuse to violate. It means that we are true to our beliefs in secret and openly.

Read Romans 3:10-11.

What does this verse teach us about righteousness?

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The problem is that our own righteousness is flawed. We are all filled with self-righteousness, pride and sinful egocentricity. No one is righteous except God.

Read Isaiah 64:6.

What does it teach us about our righteous acts?

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As moral beings, God holds us to account and justice demands a penalty for our sins. However, God is righteous and just. He shows us mercy, because He knows that He has made His righteousness available to us through His Son.

Read Isaiah 61:10.

What does it teach us about our relationship with God?

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The righteousness of God demands righteous relationships, but our sin separates us from His presence. When we repent and receive His mercy, we have a relationship with the living God, and are clothed in His righteousness. Only then can we be reconciled with others, because we are in right standing with God.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 5:

Repentance

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read 1 John 1:8-10, Micah 7:18-20, 1 John 3:18-22 and Hebrews 10:22

Trevor J Partridge writes: *Because of our propensity to unrighteousness, God has build a conscience within us. The word 'con' means "in conjunction with", and the word 'science' means "knowledge". Conscience thus meaning knowledge held in conjunction with God. It is an inbuilt alarm system that is triggered when the boundaries of our moral nature are crossed, drawing attention to our unrighteousness.*

We are not built to carry guilt and shame and we cannot deal with guilt ourselves. Repentance is agreeing with God, saying: "You are right, and I am wrong".

Read the following verses and describe what it teaches you about repentance:

1 John 1:8-10	
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Micah 7:18-20	
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Maintaining a clear conscience is one of the most important aspects of our Christian way of life. Everyday we should hold it up to the light of God and ask Him to show us our own unrighteousness, to help us repent and to allow Him to set us free.

Read 1 John 3:18-22 and Hebrews 10:22.

Identify the things that you should bring before the Lord and repent?

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End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Memory verse (Read together as a group):

God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?

Numbers 23:19

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Romans 3:21-28, 1 John 1:9, 2 Corinthians 5:20-21 and Romans 1:17

Discussion questions

Discuss the meaning of the word “Righteousness” and write a definition in your own words.

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Read Genesis 18: 16-33. God is righteous and therefore He must punish sin. In which way do we see it demonstrated here?

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Read Luke 16:15. What does Jesus mean when He says: ‘you ... justify yourselves in the eyes of others, but God knows the heart.’

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Read Romans 3:21-28. What does Paul teach us about the righteousness of God in this passage?

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Read 1 John 1:9 and 2 Corinthians 5:20-21. How can we be purified from unrighteousness?

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Close in prayer

KNOWING GOD

Week **7**

God is Holy

Memory verse:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; The whole earth is full of His glory.”

Isaiah 6:3(b)



A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE



Day 1:

The meaning of Holiness

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read the following verses out loud: 1 Samuel 2:2, Isaiah 6:3, Psalm 99:3,5,9, Exodus 15:11 and Revelation 4:8

In your own words, explain what these verses teach us about God.

1 Samuel 2:2	
Isaiah 6:3	
Psalm 99:3	
Psalm 99:5	
Psalm 99:9	

Exodus 15:11	
Revelation 4:8	

In ancient Hebrew, the word translated as "holy" (*qodeish*) meant "set apart" or "separate from." God's absolute moral and ethical purity set him apart from every other being in the universe.

Holiness is an essential part of God's character. It is one of His primary attributes, just as prevalent as His wisdom, omniscience or omnipotence. Therefore, He cannot act contrary to His nature - His actions are always perfect, just and holy. We, in contrast, many times act in ways that are inconsistent with our Christian character.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

God is Holy

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read 1 Samuel 6:20, Isaiah 5:16 and Isaiah 8:13-14

The holiness of God indicates his untouchable majesty and his infinite exaltation. It is generally accepted that God's holiness reflects on His relation to the world; the fact that He is infinitely removed from the ways of the world. God is pure, free from sin and wholly perfect in every way.

What does the following verses teach us about the Holiness of God?

1 Samuel 6:20	
Isaiah 5:16	
Isaiah 8:13	

Isaiah 8:14	
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Each time that God revealed himself to man (Moses, Job, Isaiah, etc.) each encounter mentions His holiness. In the book of Isaiah God is called “the Holy One” more than 30 times.

For human beings, holiness generally means obeying God's law, but for God, the law is part of his essence. God is the law. He is incapable of contradicting himself because moral goodness is his very nature. God is Holy.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 3:

Be holy, because I am holy!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Leviticus 11:44-45, Leviticus 20:7-8, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7, 1 Peter 1:14-16, Ephesians 4:22-24 and Romans 12:1-2

God's holiness carries monumental consequences for every person on earth. He calls every Christian to a holy life.

What does the following verses in Leviticus teach us about God's call to us to be holy?

Leviticus 11:44-45	
Leviticus 20:7-8	

God has not called us to be like other Christians, He has called us to be like Himself. Therefore we need to choose

to pursue holiness by changing our character to conform to the character of God.

What does the following verses teach us about the way in which we should change for us to be holy?

1 Thessalonians 4:3-7	
1 Peter 1:14-16	
Ephesians 4:22-24	
Romans 12:1-2	

To live a holy life is to live a life according to the moral standards of the will of God as revealed in the Bible and in contrast to the sinful ways of the world.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 4:

The pursuit of Holiness!

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Hebrews 12:14, Isaiah 64:6, Hebrews 10:10 and Romans 6:14

In His book, *The Pursuit of Holiness*, Jerry Bridges wrote: “The Pursuit of Holiness is a joint venture between God and the Christian. No one can attain any degree of holiness without God working in his life, but just as surely no one will attain it without effort on his own part. God has made it possible for us to walk in holiness. But he has given to us the responsibility of doing the walking; He does not do that for us.”

The word pursuit means the act of following something, to strive to gain or accomplish something.

What does the following verses teach us about the pursuit of holiness:

Hebrews 12:14

Isaiah 64:6
Hebrews 10:10

Pursuing Holiness is a lifelong process. It requires diligence and effort.

The Holy Spirit makes us more aware of our lack of holiness; to stimulate us to deeper yearning and striving for holiness. But Satan will attempt to discourage us.

Read Romans 6:14. What encouragement do you get from this verse?

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Sin does not have to be our master. We are living under the Grace of God, as it was gifted to us by the salvation that Jesus Christ made possible. We do not have to succumb to Satan and his temptations. We can walk the road of sanctification, because God made it possible.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 5:

Why do we not experience more personal Holiness?

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read John 17:15-17, 2 Corinthians 6:7, 2 Timothy 2:21 and Romans 12:1-2

God is Holy, and He calls his children to be holy. But we don't always experience it.

In John 17 Jesus prays for the sanctification of the children of God. Sanctification is a rather old-fashioned biblical word that we do not use a lot. It means to set a person or something apart for the use intended by its designer.

Read John 17:15-17.

What does Jesus pray for His followers and why?

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Jesus prays that the believers will be called out of this world and into the will of God, by His Word. This does not mean that we are cutting ourselves off from everything that is pleasant and enjoyable, but it means

that we are actively seeking God’s will by studying His word.

Holiness is something we choose to pursue. It is the process that changes the character of our entire lifestyle. What does the following verses teach us about sanctification?

2 Corinthians 6:17	
2 Timothy 2:21	
Romans 12:1	

To be sanctified (set apart from the world), we need to separate our minds and hearts from the standards, values and mindset of the world. We should purify our hearts and consciences and dedicate our lives wholeheartedly to God. It is the Lord who sanctifies us, but He can only do it if we submit our will to Him and are set free.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Memory Verse (read together as a group):

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; The whole earth is full of His glory.”

Isaiah 6:3(b)

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Leviticus 11:44-45 and Romans 12:1-2

Discussion Questions

Discuss the meaning of the word “Holy” and write a definition in your own words.

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Read Leviticus 11:44-45, Leviticus 20: 7-8 and 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7. What does these verses teach us about God’s call on us to be Holy?

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What are some of the world’s standards, mindsets and values that we need to separate ourselves from? Why do we find it so difficult?

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Read Romans 12:1. What important manner of sanctification is described in these verses? Why is it so important?

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Close in prayer

KNOWING GOD

Week **8**

God is Merciful

Memory verse:

The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

Psalm 145:8-9



A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE



Day 1:

Merciful God

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Ephesians 2:1-10

What do you learn about God's kindness, mercy, grace and love in this passage? Describe your thoughts and emotions below.

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God is the source of all goodness, mercy, grace, love and so much more. It is in God's nature to be merciful. God's mercy has no limits. He gives it without us even asking for it.

People often understand God's mercy as if He allows people to do evil deeds or that God overlooks certain sins in our day. However, this is not true, in God's mercy for us He punishes sin, but shows us mercy by punishing Jesus in our place.

Read Ephesians 2:4 again. It says that God is "rich in mercy". What does it mean to you? How do you experience the riches of God's mercy on your "journey" with God?

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God has unlimited abundant mercy. God's mercy makes it possible for us to become free from the habit of sin. Because of God's mercy, we now have peace, joy, fulfilment and purpose. Therefore, our lives can only be meaningful if we worship and love God, and serve others with the heart of God.

What do you think is the difference between grace and mercy?

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Grace is when God gives us what we don't deserve and mercy is when God doesn't give us what we do deserve

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

A God full of compassion

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 145:8-9 and Isaiah 49:13-18

God is a "compassionate God" What does it mean to you that God is a compassionate or merciful God? Describe your emotions and thoughts below.

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What astounds me is that God really shows compassion and mercy for His people. He gives us the assurance that He will be with us in times of hardships and trials. He comforts and strengthens His people. He does not only feels with us when we experience pain and hardship, He wants to change it too, so we must and can trust Him with our lives. The Gospels are full of examples of Jesus' compassion with those who were ill, in suffering and distressed.

Read Psalm 145:8-9 again. Write in your own words how you understand the words; *gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love*. (NIV 1984).

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God treats His people with compassion. His words, His promises, His actions are all full of compassion and mercy for us. You never have to wonder about God's motives. He always has the best for you in mind, even when things are not so good. He shows his compassion for us because He is slow to anger and rich in love. He loves us so much that He gives us the opportunity to please Him and to overcome our sins. His mercy is - not to give us what we really deserve. Be honest; if God had given us what we deserve, no one would have a chance to be in relationship with God.

Take time and praise God for His incredible compassion, love and mercy.



Day 3:

A merciful God forgives sin

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Daniel 9:9 and Titus 3:3-7

What does it mean to you that God has forgiven your sins because of His great mercy? Describe your emotions and thoughts below.

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Any parent knows that our feelings of grace and mercy are tested by our children. Parents set their children boundaries because they love them. Sometimes it is necessary to discipline, but still with love and compassion. That's how God works. He sets boundaries so that we could be safe. Sometimes, just the fact that we have violated the boundary brings hardship. Sometimes God punishes, but always with compassion.

Read Exodus 34:5-7

Take time to reflect on this passage. How do you understand that God says, *"I forgive ... but I leave the guilty unpunished?"* What do you think God means when

He says, *"I punish children and their children for the sins of their parents ...?"*

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God forgive sins, yet sins are punished says this passage. So which sins are forgiven and which ones not? Sin brings distance between God and people. Sins that are not confessed leads to a bad relationship between God and His people. God forgives us if we show remorse and turn away from our evil ways.

Children who turn away from their parents' sins are free from God's punishment. Parents must, however know that the effects of their sins and wrong choices have an effect over generations. The more we allow sin to rule over us, the greater the effect is on our descendants. It's like a contagious disease, my children do not suffer because I have it, but they catch it from me and then suffer because they have it.

Two important things that only God knows how to handle, is His mercy and His righteousness. People can never think that God will not punish sin because He is gracious. Unconverted people are not free from punishment.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 4:

God's mercies every day

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Hebrews 4:14-16 and read again Titus 3:5-7

Read these two passages carefully again and describe your thoughts and emotions below.

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God's mercy goes far beyond just the forgiving of our sins. As His children, He wants us to live in His abundance. In His great mercy, He gives us His Spirit to help us grow spiritually, and through that we experience joy and peace. God lives with us every day and shows His compassion when we are burdened or tired.

Listen to Jesus invitation: *"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls."* (Matthew 11:28-29 NIV). *"The LORD is my shepherd, I lack nothing. He makes me lie down in green pastures,*

*he leads me beside quiet waters, he refreshes my soul.
He guides me along the right paths for his name's sake.”
(Psalm 23:1-3 NIV)*

Read Matthew 5:43-45

How do you feel about this passage? Is God fair? If yes, why? And if no, why not? What do these verses mean for your everyday life?

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God provides the basic necessities for every human being on earth, because every human being is His creature, made to His image and whom He loves. Sometimes we take His goodness for granted until disaster or calamity hits us. Then we usually complain to God, but when everything is good we tend to forget to see how wonderful God maintains His creation. We easily forget to thank and praise God for His continued provision.

Take time and praise God for his daily provisions. For the food on the table, for friends and family, for music, for art, for the sunset and thank you very much.



Day 5:

Be merciful as our Father is merciful

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Luke 6:27-36

How do you think you will be able to let God's mercy works through you? Think of someone who is hostile to you, how do you think it's possible to love him or her, just as Jesus wants us to do? Think of practical adjustments that you may have to make to display more of God's mercies.

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Do you sometimes feel empty on your spiritual path with God? Do you have unforgiveness or bitterness in your heart? Write down your emotions and thoughts. Ask God to show you His mercy.

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The more you experience God's mercy, the more His mercy should flow through you. He is the source of all goodness and we are the streams that should spread His goodness.

As you plant the seed of God's kindness and compassion in other people, they might want this goodness and it may convince them of His love and lead to the repentance of their sin and accepting Jesus.

Jesus said: *"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful."*
How do you see this in your everyday life functioning?
How do you plan to carry God's compassion to others?

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The thing that excites me about God's mercy is that we can be the examples here on earth of God's compassion for us towards other people. They can, through us, experience God's mercy.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Memory verse:

The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

Psalms 145:8-9

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Ephesians 2:1-10, Psalm 145:8-9 and Luke 6:34-36

Discussion questions

Why is the understanding of God's mercy so important if we want to have a better understanding of God's character? Define mercy.

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Read Ephesians 2:4-5 again. Talk about what these verses mean to you and how it changes or should change your life?

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How do you handle people who wronged you? Give practical advice on how to forgive others.

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How can we practically convey God's kindness and mercy in our family and in the world? Give examples.

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Close in prayer

KNOWING GOD

Week **9**

God is Love

Memory verse:

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

1 John 4:10



**A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE**



Day 1:

God is love

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read 1 John 4:10-21

Take time to think about this passage. Think about truths like: *"What genuine love is? (verse 10), God is love, God in me, (verse 16b), God first loved us (verse 19)."* Describe your emotions and thoughts.

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The character of God is summarized in these words in verse 16b, **God is love**. "God is love" isn't just something to use on a poster or as a beautiful slogan. God's love was demonstrated in the deepest way by Jesus Christ on the cross. There is no greater love than that.

We had no influence on God that He should love us. He loved us first, when we were sinners.

His love is eternal, perfect, it is incomprehensible and can not be extinguished.

Think about how you've thought about love and how the world and other people describe love. How did it affect your understanding of God's love?

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We sometimes think that God's love changes as a result of our actions. If we sin, God loves us less. Our love for people sometimes ends and is often determined by other people's actions. God rather shows His love through His actions and gives Himself as a sacrifice, rather that it is influenced by our actions.

God does not just love, He is love. It's something no human can ever be. We may love, but we can never be love, that is an unique characteristic of God alone.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

God's love is perfect

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read 1 John 4:18-19

Read these two verses carefully again. How would you describe perfect love? What do you fear? What is perfect love that drives out fear and punishment?

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Millions of people in the world live in some kind of fear or anxiety. People fear being alone, people are anxious in times of trial, sickness and death. People also fear the coming judgment. But that's why God sent His Son. God's Word says in John 3:17 that He did not send His Son to judge the world but to save it. That's what God's perfect love is. In Romans 8:1 Paul says that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ. Verse 38-39 says that nothing on earth and in heaven can separate us from the love of God, the love He has for us in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

How does God's Word describe perfect love? Describe your emotions and thoughts.

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From God, the source of all, His perfect love flows. God puts in us a desire to have perfect love and to have an intimate love relationship with Him. Examine yourself, do you also desire to love God with perfect love? Give yourself to God so that He can give you more of His love and let you experience it daily.

Because God loves us, He has a wonderful future for us in mind. He already gives us abundant life on earth and one day we will see and experience His perfect love in heaven.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 3:

Love to die for

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read John 3:16-17, 1 John 3:16 and 4:16

Ponder about these verses in prayer. What is this love really and what drives it? Describe your emotions and thoughts below.

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People are sometimes willing to die for a cause or for their country. Jesus did not die for a good cause, He died for people. People with names, faces, personalities, flaws and sins. He did that because He loved those people, each one personally and you too.

Every sin for which Jesus has paid has a name. They were genuine thoughts, words and deeds. There were real sins of hate and anger, sins of sexual nature, lusts, evil motives, gossip, theft, murder and so on. Some of those sins were yours. It is you who Jesus loved so much

that He was willing to die for, so that you can experience the love of God again.

Read Romans 5:1-8

Take time to think about these verses. How do you feel about the fact that God died for you when you were still a sinner? How should we take this demonstration of God's love personally? Describe your emotions and thoughts below.

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We have already heard that Jesus' love is unconditional and personal. The love that Jesus has for you is not just a universal love, it's personal, He loves you. Listen to what Paul says about God's love through Jesus.

Read Galatians 2:20b

We live in faith, because Christ proved his love for me by laying down his life for me.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 4:

God's love grows in me

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Ephesians 3:14-21

Read verses 18-19 again. Think of the love God has for you. How do you think God wants to grow his love in you? Why do you think it is so hard for us to understand the extent of God's love for us?

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One of the biggest problems we as Christians are struggling with is to understand the fullness and extent of God's love for us. It is necessary that you spend more time with God just to think about his love for you, otherwise when difficult times come, we can easily think God is not loving us anymore or we could ask: "where is God's love now?"

If we were to ask Paul and the early Christians, what motivated them to follow Christ despite persecution and

suffering, the answer would simply be that they understood the love of Christ.

Read Matthew 22:37-39

What does it mean to love God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind? What does “all” mean for you? How do you see this happening in your life? How do you plan to grow in your love for God?

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The amazing thing about God is that his heart desires to have an intimate, deep, love relationship with you. He did not love us half way. In giving His love, He gave everything. He waits for you and me to have special times of love with Him every day and regularly, throughout the day. These times He is ready to give His hand full of blessings to you. His eyes are on you, waiting and his ears are keen to hear when you approach Him in love. He likes to walk with you every day.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 5:

Vessels of God's love

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Matthew 22:37-39, 1 John 3:11-17 and 1 John 4:20-5: 5

Ponder about these verses. In what ways are you carrying God's love and in what ways not? What difference can God's love make through you to people in your world? Describe your emotions and thoughts below.

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Jesus' first commandment is that we must love God above all and with everything we have. Jesus continues and says that from that love for God, we must love our neighbour, the people we share this world with.

It's the love of God for us and the love we have for God, which makes it possible to love a world in need of love. God wants us to carry His supernatural love in our hearts to other people.

Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-17

How does God want you to think about the people in your world? Is this always possible?

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Read Mathew 5:44

How is it possible for you to love your enemies? Who are the people in your life whom it is difficult to love?

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If you wait to love people until you feel love for them, you are going to wait a long time. Love is more than just a feeling. Love is an act of obedience. To love someone who is difficult to love, is often a step in faith. Trust God to grow the love you need to love people, in you. Start by praying for these people and be kind and helpful. Show them Jesus before you even think of loving them.

If you grow in your love for God, it will become visible. When someone loves someone or something they often can't help talking about it. The world needs to hear and see, Christians who really live what they believe.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



GROUP DISCUSSION:

Prayer

Memory verse:

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins."

1 John 4:10

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

1 John 4:7-21, John 3:16-18, Ephesians 3:14-21 and Matthew 22:37-39

Discussion questions

How does the world understand love and how does it affect our experience of love and especially God's love?

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How is it possible to understand God's love? Give first-hand examples of His love in your life.

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Help each other, with examples of how to love God with all your heart and all your soul and all your mind.

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How is the love for your neighbour a demonstration of God's love for this world? Talk to each other about this.

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Close in prayer

KNOWING GOD

Week **10**

God is Immutable

memory verse:

*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today
and forever.*

Hebrews 13:8



A HEART FOR GOD
A HEART FOR PEOPLE



Day 1:

God is Immutable

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Exodus 3:14, Psalm 102:25-28, Malachi 3:6; James 1:17, Hebrews 1:10-12 and Psalm 90:2

In Exodus 3:14 God gives us a very specific insight into His essence. Write in your own words what this verse means to you.

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Something that is immutable is unchangeable. One dictionary definition states that immutability is the quality of not being subject to or susceptible to change.

What does the following verses teach us about God's attribute of immutability?

Psalm 102:25-28	
Malachi 3:6	

James 1:17	
Hebrews 1:10-12	

Change is measured over time. Something used to be one way and is now another. God created time and is therefore outside of time. Because God is outside of time, He cannot change or be changed. Read Psalm 90: 2. What reassurance do we get from this verse?

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Psalm 90:2 says that before anything was created, God was eternal and existed in the same state that He is in now. God is not subject to change through time or circumstances. He is invariable. He is the same today as He was a thousand years ago. God’s nature does not change, nor does His character or attributes. When something changes, it is made better, worse, or different. But because God is perfect, He cannot be made better or develop into a holier being. There is no need for Him to change.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 2:

God's love is immutable

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read 1 John 4:8 and 16, 1 Chronicles 16:34, 1 John 3:1 and Romans 8:37-39

How does 1 John 4:8 describe God?

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God is love. God's love for us is constant and certain.

What does the following verses teach us about God's love for us?

1 John 4:16	
1 Chronicles 16:34	
1 John 3:1	

God is love, and His love is unconquerable. As sinners, we strife against God's love, but it conquers us. His love for us is never diminished despite all the sins we commit.

Read Romans 8:37-39. What reassurance regarding God's immutable love do we receive in these verses?

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Nothing can come between us and God's love. God cannot change for the better, for He is perfect; His love cannot be diminished as it is also perfect, because God is love.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 3:

God is immutable in His will

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Jeremiah 29:11, Ephesians 1:11-12, Philippians 1:6

We can be sure of who God is. He is our holy, eternal Father, just as He has been to His people since the beginning of the world.

The Immutability of God assures us of God's perfect will in our lives.

Read Jeremiah 29:11. What assurance does this verse give you?

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He is immutable in his plans and purposes. He does not purpose something today that he changes tomorrow because He does not change his mind. Because God is infinite in his wisdom, there is no error in the conception of his plans. All of His plans are perfect, and he does not have to reason about them. He has within himself the

power to know which is the finest plan. The problem is that we do not always follow His plan for our lives. Read the following verses and in your own words, describe the assurance God is giving us through these verses:

Ephesians 1:11-12	
Philippians 1:6	

God cares about each of us as an individual. He wants the best for us and wants to lead us in the path of His perfect will. This begins when we ask Him to come into our lives and forgive us our sins.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 4:

What does this mean in our lives?

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Psalm 4:8, Psalm 147:5, Acts 18:21 and 1 Corinthians 16:7

The Immutability of God gives us comfort and security in who we are and who God is. Knowing God does not change provides us with a spiritual and moral anchor in a rapidly changing culture. When we are pulled in many directions and are searching for answers, we can know that God is constant, dependable and faithful to help us when we ask.

Read the following verses and describe what comfort you receive from them:

Psalm 4:8	
Psalm 147:5	

God will not leave us, but will guide us through troubles that are sure to come our way. There is no problem too

big for God, therefore we may have the peace to lie down and sleep during difficult times.

Because God is immutable, we need to learn that God’s perfect will for us, is the best. Read the following verses and reflect on the way believers acknowledged God’s will in their lives.

Acts 18:21	
1 Corinthians 16:7	

In a world where the only constant is change, God remains unchanged. We can rely on Him to be our solid foundation. Therefor we should acknowledge that things happen according to His will and plan.

End today’s study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



Day 5:

Conclusion

Begin the study by spending time in prayer.

Read Deuteronomy 32:4 and Psalm 18:2,31-32

Read the following verses and in your own words, describe what it means to you:

Deuteronomy 32:4	
Psalm 18:2	
Psalm 18:31-32	

God's immutability is a constant comfort to believers because it means God is always faithful to His promises and the principles of His Word. For this reason, God is called "the Rock". When the entire world around us seems to fluctuate and shake, God is the one safe and faithful place of anchorage.

The unchanging nature of God can give us peace. God's character will not change. He is the same yesterday, today and forever. We can trust Him to be who He says He is. God is not going to suddenly stop loving us or suddenly stop being just.

God is our Rock. His character, His love for us and His faithfulness to us will never change.

End today's study by returning to the Lord in prayer.



GROUP DISCUSSION

Prayer

Memory Verse:

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.

Hebrews 13:8

Reflection:

Share with the group members how God worked in your life during this week.

Scripture Reading:

Exodus 3:14, Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalm 102:25-28;
Malachi 3:6 and Jeremiah 29:11

Discussion Questions

Discuss the meaning of the word “Immutable” and write a definition in your own words.

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A.W Pink writes: “God cannot change for the better, for He is perfect; and being perfect, He cannot change for the worse.” Discuss this statement.

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Read Jeremiah 29:11. Discuss the practical implications of this verse. If God’s plan for us is good, why do we experience suffering and strife?

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Read Genesis 6:5-7 and Jonah 3:10. If God is immutable, what is meant by such statements found in the Bible that speak of God repenting or changing His mind? Discuss in the group.

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Immutability is not immobility. It does not mean that God cannot change His actions, or way of dealing with men in different situations and times. It simply means His character and attributes do not change.

A.W Tozer said: "All God's reasons come from within his uncreated being. Nothing has entered the being of God from eternity, nothing has been removed and nothing has been changed."

Close in prayer



Definition of Biblical Attributes

Creator:

God alone is eternal; therefore, before his initial act of creation, nothing existed apart from him. God is the One through whom all things have come into existence; by His unbounded power and knowledge He created and formed the universe as it now is.

Omniscient:

God is omniscient – that means that He has complete knowledge – He knows everything. This includes the past, the present, and the future. There is one reality and God knows it in its entirety, as it exists by, through and for Him.

Omnipotent:

Omnipotence is the quality of having unlimited power. God has all power.

Omnipresent:

Omnipresence means that God is present everywhere at the same time. Omnipresence does not imply that God is spread out or diffused throughout the universe in that only part of Him is everywhere. He is wholly present as

fully as if He were in only one place. God completely fills the entire universe and all aspects of it without diffusion, expansion, multiplication, or division.

Sovereignty of God:

It is the biblical teaching that all things are under God's rule and control, and that nothing happens without His direction or permission. The sovereignty of God is not merely that God has the power and right to govern all things, but that He does so, always and without exception. In other words, God is not merely sovereign *de jure* (in principle), but sovereign *de facto* (in practice).

Righteous:

Being Righteous means to act in accord with divine or moral law; free from guilt or sin. This attribute of righteousness is the way God's holiness is expressed when dealing with men. Righteousness is also the state of moral perfection required by God for us to enter heaven.

Holy:

Holiness is an essential part of God's character. In ancient Hebrew, the word translated as "holy" (*qodeish*) meant "set apart" or "separate from." God's absolute moral and ethical purity set him apart from every other being in the universe.

Merciful:

Mercy is when that which is deserved is withheld to the benefit of the object of the mercy. God has demonstrated this attribute in abundance with respect to mankind.

Love:

God is love. This word encapsulates for us His mercy, grace and loving-kindness. God is not like the deities of other religions who are thought of as angry and hateful. God is loving towards His creatures. He wants to share a personal relationship with us.

Immutable:

Immutability is the quality of not being subject to or susceptible to change. Change is measured over time. God created time and is therefore outside of time. Because God is outside of time, He cannot change or be changed.



Memory verses

Week 1:

*In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.
Genesis 1:1*

Week 2:

*Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! "Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counsellor? Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?" For from him and through him and for him are all things.
Romans 11:33-36*

Week 3:

*I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.
Ephesians 1:18-19a*

Week 4:

*The eyes of the Lord are everywhere, keeping watch on the wicked and the good.
Proverbs 15:3*

Week 5:

I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come. I say: My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.

Isaiah 46:9b-10

Week 6:

God is not human, that he should lie, not a human being, that he should change his mind. Does he speak and then not act? Does he promise and not fulfil?

Numbers 23:19

Week 7:

“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; The whole earth is full of His glory.”

Isaiah 6:3b

Week 8:

The Lord is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. The Lord is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made.

Psalms 145:8-9

Week 9:

*“This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us
and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins.”*

1 John 4:10

Week 10:

*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and
today and forever.*

Hebrews 13:8



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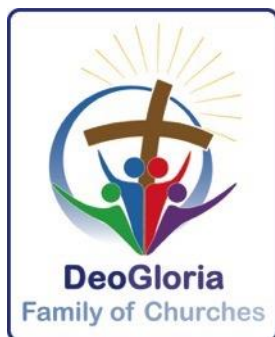
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Various commentaries and notes on the Preceptaustin.org website.



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