

A GATHERING WELL BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

# THE HEART OF KNOWING JESUS

BEGIN WITH PRAYER | STUDY THE BIBLE | BUILD COMMUNITY



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# welcome



This foundational Bible study guide is designed to help you establish rhythms of practice in three core areas of the Christian life: **prayer**, **Bible study**, and **community building**.

These are practices designed to support you as you grow in your personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Each icon signifies a resource to help you apply the practices of prayer, Bible study, and living in Biblical community.



## BEGIN WITH PRAYER

An intentional, step-by-step prayer resource that will give you words and point you to scripture that will encourage how you talk to God.



## STUDY THE BIBLE

Practical tools to equip you to study your Bible using unique approaches designed to make God's Word come alive to you.



## BUILD COMMUNITY

A resource that will challenge you to remember that God has designed you to be in relationship with Him and others and equip you to live in Biblical community.



# begin with prayer



## THE CHARACTER OF GOD

We cannot love someone we do not know. The more we know someone, the more we learn to love them, and, likely, the more we will desire to talk with them. Taking time to consider the character of God increases our knowledge of Him and our love for Him. Today's discipline? Simply **meditate on the character of God.**

**God desires to be known.**

[Isaiah 43:10,]

**God has no limits.**

[Matt 19:26, Job 11:7-9, Job 42:2]

**God is beyond our human comprehension.**

[Rom 11:33, Psalm 145:3, Isaiah 40:28]

**God relies on no one and on nothing.**

[Acts 17:24-25]

**God does not change.**

[Heb 13:8, Malachi 3:6, Psalm 90:2]

**God is all powerful.**

[Heb 1:3, Psalm 147:5]

**God is all knowing.**

[Psalm 139, Heb 4:13]

**God is everywhere.**

[Prov 15:3, Jer 23:23-24]

**God has authority over all.**

[Matt 28:18, Col 1:16]

**God is full of grace and mercy.**

[Psalm 145:9, Eph 2:4-7]



# MICRO-STUDY ON PRAYER

*Open a Bible (or app) to read Matthew 6:9-13, then answer the following questions:*

## **WHAT DOES IT SAY?**

- How does Jesus refer to God in verse 9?
- What does “hallowed” mean?
- List four things Jesus asks God for in verses 10 - 13.

## **WHAT DOES IT MEAN?**

- Why does Jesus refer to God as Father? What does that imply?
- How are we to approach God?
- Why does Jesus pray for God’s kingdom before praying for his needs?
- What is our daily bread? (cross reference John 6:35, Matt 6:25-34)
- What does it mean to forgive our debts? How does this apply to us as Christians?

## **HOW CAN THIS INFLUENCE YOUR PRAYERS?**



# P.R.A.I.S.E. MODEL OF PRAYER

*Use the model below to guide your prayer time today.*

## **PRAISE**

Acknowledge and praise God for who He is and what He's done. Praising God helps us view Him correctly as we approach Him in prayer. (Psalm 100:4-5)

## **REPENTANCE**

Confess any sins the Father brings to mind and thank God for His forgiveness. Repentance involves walking away from sin and into the freedom offered by Jesus. (1 John 1:9, Romans 2:4, Romans 8:1-2)

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

God's authority over our lives is His alone. What areas of your life can you submit to His authority? (Psalm 135:6, Colossians 1:17-18)

## **INTERCESSION**

Go to God on behalf of others. Lay the request before Him and allow Him to work out the details. (Colossians 1:3, 1 Timothy 2:1-4)

## **SUPPLICATION**

Ask God about your own needs. Share everything with Him. Don't hold anything back, take everything before Him, because He cares for you. (Colossians 4:2, 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

## **EQUIPPING**

Ask God to guide you and teach you as you rely on the Holy Spirit in your desire to grow in relationship with Him and others. (1 John 2:27)



# Study the Bible



## INTRODUCTION

### RELYING ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

Spending time with God in His Word is a lifelong process. We encourage you to trust that process over to the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said, "but the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you" (John 14:26). This means that it is the **Holy Spirit that teaches us** when we seek to understand God's Word.

Therefore, as you go to God's Word, the Bible, to read, study, or listen to what it has to say -- we encourage you to first pray and ask the Holy Spirit to give you eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand what He has to teach you.

### READING THE BIBLE

There are an infinite number of ways to approach reading your Bible. Two ways we often approach it are:

- **Topical:** Going to the Bible with questions or interests about a specific topic. For example, "hope." Topical study means searching the passages that mention "hope" to gain understanding about the topic.
- **Contextual:** Studying complete thoughts, passages, texts, etc. and how they sit within the grand narrative of God's story.

We encourage you to read your Bible with the perspective that the Bible holds a complete story of God's redemptive plan of salvation. You can start with a topic or start with an entire passage, our hope is that you'll start and see those snapshots within God's bigger picture.



## STUDYING IN COMMUNITY

*Open a Bible (or app) to read Acts 2:42, then consider the following:*

After Jesus' resurrection and before He returned to heaven, He told those following Him that He wanted them to love one another, to go back out into the world, and tell others all that they saw and learned from him. The book of Acts is a picture of the "early church" (the believers and followers of Jesus) doing what Jesus told them to do.

This verse tells us that the people studied God's Word. It also tells us that they did it together. Is there someone in your life that you can do this with? Is there someone you can invite to learn with you? Is there someone you can teach how to do this also?

## PRAYER

Take time to jot down a prayer and invite the Holy Spirit's leadership in your study and ask Him to bring to mind who might join you as you seek to approach the Word of God in community. If He doesn't bring anyone to mind at the outset, tune your ears to listen as you proceed!



## PRACTICING YOUR STUDY

### STEP 1

Open a Bible (or app) to read the entire book of 2 Timothy.

### STEP 2

Observe the text by circling, highlighting, and/or underlining the things you see in the passage. You might identify such things as:

- Lists
- Instructions
- Repeated words or phrases
- References to time, people, or places
- Characters
- Connections ("therefore", "and", "thus", etc.)

### STEP 3

What questions do you have so far? Go back to the text and consider what stood out to you and ask yourself why. What questions do you have about what you read?

## STEP 4

Discover the answers to your questions:

- Read the backstory (if you don't have a study Bible, now is a great time to consider getting one!)
- Read the cross referenced verses (these are the little letters and numbers within the text that have a matching verse in the margin, look up those verses)
- Look up the definitions of the words you've circled, highlighted, underlined, etc.
- And as a final step in your discovery process, consider reading a commentary or different translation of the passage (The Message, Amplified Version, etc.)

## STEP 5

Find the principles that help you apply God's Word to your everyday life:

- What does this teach me about God?
- In light of that, what does this teach me about myself?
- How does this knowledge convict/encourage/or move me to worship?

# build community



## INTRODUCTION

### PRAY FOR COMMUNITY

The perfect life of Jesus is also a perfect display of community. Jesus had many followers. He had twelve disciples that sat at His feet to learn, who sat next to Him at meals, who served alongside Him throughout his journey. Of the many that journeyed with Jesus, there was one whom Jesus loved.

It is not that Jesus loved this disciple in a way that He does not love us, He died for us just as He died for John. But it is that John recognized this love and allowed it to be what identified him most (John 11:3, 5). The love of Jesus as his friend is who John believed himself to be.

So let that be your prayer today. For the one whom Jesus loved to be you and for someone to be a display of that love in your life.

**PRAY:** Father in heaven, show me the person whom You love that You would have me love as a friend and is a person to build community with.



## WHAT IS COMMUNITY?

The most beautiful example of community is displayed in the Trinity. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are three separate persons that are simultaneously one. While that concept may feel really foreign and difficult to understand, it is true.

It is also true that the unity of the Trinity is something God desires for us. In John 17: 21 - 23, Jesus prays that we would be one just as He is one with God and the Holy Spirit. A communal God praying for those that follow him to live in community with Him and each other.

Community with others comes first through community in Christ.

### **READ JOHN 17 AND ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:**

- Who does Jesus pray for?
- List everything He asks of the Father.
- How does Jesus love in you move you towards others?



## PRACTICING BUILDING COMMUNITY

Community is something you build as you are going. As you are going to work, to school, to drop kids off at school, or take care of people in your life. As you are going in the places God has you, you can be building community with the people God has surrounded you with. Whether you already have a solid foundation, or you are still figuring it out- building community is an ongoing process.

Now that you've been praying for someone to build community with and you have a picture of what community is (unity in devotion to Jesus with other believers), you can come up with a plan to continue to build and grow in community.

- Create a consistent rhythm that works for you.
- Invite someone to join you in praying and studying the Bible.
- Don't give up coming together even when it gets hard (and it will get hard).

### STEP 1

Use the boxes below to brainstorm the people, places, and things that you could build community with.

<b>FAMILY</b>	<b>CO-WORKERS</b>	<b>NEIGHBORS</b>	<b>GROUPS</b>
<b>HOBBIES</b>	<b>WORK</b>	<b>VOLUNTEERS</b>	<b>ACTIVITIES</b>

## STEP 2

Pray over the lists on the previous page. Ask God to show you who He wants you to take a next step with or where He wants you to spend more time. Now, choose one person you are going to be intentional with this week and ask yourself: ***How can I build community with this person, in this place, or with this thing?***

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## STEP 3

What's your action plan? Choose today to act on your plan to build community.





## **THE GATHERING WELL**

Helping Everyday People Become Everyday  
Leaders Who Know, Follow and Grow with Jesus.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

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