

The background of the entire page is a light green, repeating pattern of stylized flowers and leaves. The flowers have multiple petals and prominent stamens, resembling hibiscus or similar tropical blooms. The leaves are simple, pointed shapes with visible veins.

# Something More

*Pursuing a Deeper  
Relationship with God*

Something More: Pursuing a Deeper Relationship with God

Written by Kristi Houser

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# Introduction

Dear Student,

What do you need—right now?

- \*~ Courage to face the difficulties in your life?
- \*~ Patience in dealing with yourself and others?
- \*~ Someone who will listen and not judge you?
- \*~ Freedom from fear?
- \*~ Direction for your future?
- \*~ Relief from stress?
- \*~ Someone who values you and sees you as precious?
- \*~ Peace in the chaos of life?
- \*~ Someone who can bring good out of your mistakes?
- \*~ A faithful friend?
- \*~ Victory over sin in your life?
- \*~ Someone that knows who you really are?
- \*~ Assurance that your faith is real?

The list could go on and on, couldn't it? Chances are that if you've picked up this book, it's because you're searching for something. You may not even know what it is that you need—just that you desperately need it.

- \*~ Do you ever feel that something's missing in your life?
- \*~ Do you have more questions about God than answers?
- \*~ Do you desire to go deeper in your relationship with God than ever before?

If you answered “yes” to any of the questions above, you are in the right place. Would you believe me if I told you that what you're searching for is within your grasp? It is found in a relationship with God, your Creator.

This study has two main purposes: (1) to confront some of your toughest questions about God and (2) to provide you with tools—spiritual disciplines—that will help you as you pursue a deeper relationship with Him.

Dear friend, you were made for relationship with God. He is longing for you to know Him as He is. Whether or not it makes sense right now, He is the more you're looking for!

Are you ready to begin the journey of your life? What are you waiting for? Let's get started!

## LESSON 1

# Studying Scripture (Part 1)

## Introduction

Have you ever felt like studying Scripture is a duty—just another thing to check off your list? Perhaps you know it’s something you “should do” everyday, but you don’t really know why. Why *is* studying Scripture so important? The answer may surprise you. It isn’t about meeting a certain standard or expectation that God has set—it is about deepening your relationship with Him.

God has created each of us with a desire to be known and loved for who we are, and, believe it or not, God wants the same thing. He longs for us to know Him as He is. For if we know Him—I mean, really know Him—we can’t help but love Him.

Developing your relationship with God is similar to developing an earthly friendship—it takes effort. The more time you spend with God, getting to know Him through His Word, the deeper your relationship will become. Do you desire to know God as He really is? Let’s get started!

## Session Notes

Why Should I Study the Bible?

- \* To get to \_\_\_\_\_ God
  - ☞ The Bible is \_\_\_\_\_ Story
  - ☞ Every book and passage reveals His \_\_\_\_\_
- \* To see things in their proper \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☞ We see \_\_\_\_\_ as He is
  - ☞ We see \_\_\_\_\_ as we are
  - ☞ We see \_\_\_\_\_ as it is
- \* To discover the Bible’s uniqueness
  - ☞ \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ by God
  - ☞ \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

## Wrapping It Up

### What We've Learned

1. God wants us to know Him.
2. The Bible is His story, and every passage is ultimately about Him.
3. Seeing God as He is changes the way we see ourselves and everything else around us.
4. The Bible is a unique Book, inspired and preserved by God.
5. God uses His living Word and the Holy Spirit to change us into Christ's likeness.

### This Month's Assignment

Do you remember God's primary goal for giving us the Bible? So that we can know Him! Over the next month, you will study one of God's attributes each day. Not only will you see for yourself from Scripture what God is like, you will also think about how that affects your perception of Him, yourself, and everything else. It is time for us to see things as they really are!

There are four weeks of assignments, broken down into five days each—one per weekday. Use days 6 and 7 to review what you've learned. Though the passages and attributes are different, the questions each day are the same.

# WEEK 1

## Day 1—God Is Above All

Explain what Isaiah 44:6–8 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is above all?

How does knowing that God is above all change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 2—God Is Eternal

Explain what Rev. 4:8–11 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is eternal?

How does knowing that God is eternal change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

### Day 3—God Is Faithful

Explain what Psalm 33:4–5 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is faithful?

How does knowing that God is faithful change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

### Day 4—God Is Free

Explain what Psalm 115:1–3 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is free?

How does knowing that God is free change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?



## Day 5—God Is Gracious

Explain what Psalm 103:10–12 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is gracious?

How does knowing that God is gracious change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## WEEK 2

### Day 1—God Is Good

Explain what Psalm 145:8–10 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is good?

How does knowing that God is good change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 2—God Is Glorious

Explain what Revelation 21:22–24 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is glorious?

How does knowing that God is glorious change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 3—God Is Holy

Explain what Isaiah 6:1–4 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is holy?

How does knowing that God is holy change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 4—God Is Immutable

Explain what Hebrews 13:8 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is immutable?

How does knowing that God is immutable change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 5—God Is Infinite

Explain what Psalm 90:1–2 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is infinite?

How does knowing that God is infinite change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## WEEK 3

### Day 1—God Is Just

Explain what Psalm 9:7–8 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is just?

How does knowing that God is just change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

### Day 2—God Is Loving

Explain what 1 John 4:9–10 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is loving?

How does knowing that God is loving change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

### Day 3—God Is Merciful

Explain what Romans 5:6–8 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is merciful?

How does knowing that God is merciful change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

### Day 4—God Is Omnipotent

Explain what Job 26:7–10, 14 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is omnipotent?

How does knowing that God is omnipotent change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 5—God Is Omnipresent

Explain what Psalm 139:7–10 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is omnipresent?

How does knowing that God is omnipresent change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## WEEK 4

## Day 1—God Is Omniscient

Explain what Hebrews 4:12–13 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is omniscient?

How does knowing that God is omniscient change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 2—God Is Self-Existent

Explain what Isaiah 43:10–13 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is self-existent?

How does knowing that God is self-existent change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 3—God Is Self-Sufficient

Explain what Psalm 24:1–2 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is self-sufficient?

How does knowing that God is self-sufficient change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 4—God Is Sovereign

Explain what 1 Chronicles 29:10–13 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is sovereign?

How does knowing that God is sovereign change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?

## Day 5—God Is Wise

Explain what Isaiah 55:8–9 says in your own words.

What do you think it means that God is wise?

How does knowing that God is wise change how you view Him? Yourself? The world around you?



## *Dear Searching Daughter,*

*L* know everything about you, even the many questions you have about Me—questions that you may be afraid to voice. I know that you question My existence. Do not be afraid to ask Me to show you that I am real. If you are willing to ask that question, My answer will be the start of an incredible discovery of who I Am. There are things that I cannot wait to reveal to you about what I am like.

*I want you to know these two things from the start: I have always existed, and I love you. The revelation of who I am can truly be summarized by these two statements. Before the world existed, I was. My plan for all of creation began in eternity past, and My glory can be seen every day in the beauty and power of what I have created. From the loudest clap of thunder to the most magnificent mountain range, everything in creation speaks of Me. I rule over all in strength and authority. I AM God!*

*My love for you reaches to the heavens. It is so vast that your mind cannot fully comprehend it. The greatest expression of My love to you is the gift of My precious Son, whom I sent to make the ultimate sacrifice so that you could be restored to fellowship with Me. My love for you has no end. It is neither earned nor deserved—yet I offer it freely. Dear one, you have captured My heart. Now, will you let Me show you who I really am?*

*With Everlasting Hope,*

*Your God*





LESSON 2

# *“Does God really see me?”*

“Emily, honey, wake up,” nudged her mother. “We’re almost there.”

Emily rubbed her eyes sleepily. “What time is it?” she mumbled.

“It’s a little after 2 a.m. You’ve been sleeping for the last hundred miles or so.”

Reality hit Emily like a wave. “I’m sorry, Mom,” said Emily. “I was supposed to help keep you awake.”

“Don’t worry about it, dear. I knew you were tired. Besides, God has been taking care of us, just like we prayed that He would.”

“Yeah, I know, but I still feel bad that I didn’t do my part.”

Virginia Spencer reached over and stroked her daughter’s silky brown hair. “Believe me, sweetheart, you did more than your part today. I couldn’t have made it without your help. Twenty-two hours is too long for anyone to drive on her own.”

“Thank goodness I took driver’s ed. last semester, or I wouldn’t have known what to do on the interstate—with all those merging lanes and everything.”

“Yes, you handled yourself very well on the road today,” Virginia praised. “I wasn’t afraid at all.”

“Oh really?” teased Emily. “Is that why you were clutching your seatbelt and pumping your foot like you were stepping on an imaginary brake?”

“Did I do that?” asked Virginia.

“Yes, you did.”

“I’m sorry, Emily. I guess I’m just not used to having someone chauffeur me around. Will you forgive me?”

“Of course, Mom. I know you didn’t mean to do it. It was kind of funny though,” she chuckled.

Emily readjusted her inflatable travel pillow and stared out the window into the black night. The lulling sound of the tires on the pavement had a soothing effect. Her 11-year-old sister Sarah, who was snuggled up cozily in the back seat with her fuzzy blanket, had been asleep for hours. She seemed completely unfazed that she had only a small portion of the seat and that the rest was engulfed with luggage. *It must be nice to be that content*, Emily thought. Outside, the moon hung bright and full, a million stars twinkled and danced, and the outline of trees formed a dark silhouette against the night sky.

“What are you thinking about?” asked Emily’s mom.

“Just how big everything looks out here.”

“The sky looks a lot different when it isn’t cluttered with high rise buildings and city lights, doesn’t it?”

“Yes, it does. I can actually see the stars—there must be thousands of them.”

“There are probably even more than that, and to think that God calls each of them by name. Isn’t that amazing?”

Emily gave a half-hearted “uh-huh” and turned to face the window again, hoping for no further questions.

“What’s the matter? Don’t you agree?”

Emily’s heart beat fast. She wasn’t sure how to answer her mother’s question, so she just answered honestly. “Yes, I do think it’s amazing that God knows every star’s name.” Then she swallowed hard and continued, “I just wish He knew mine.” Normally Emily could suppress her nagging doubts. Maybe it was because of the long car ride or the exhaustion or the move or a combination of everything—but at this moment everything inside of her felt raw.

“Oh, sweetheart, God knows your name. He’s the One who made you. He knows how many hairs are on your head.”

Emily smiled faintly at her mother. “Yeah, I know all that. But sometimes it doesn’t feel like He sees me—you know, really sees me.”

“Believe me, He sees you right now. And He knows you better than you know yourself. Isn’t it incredible that a God so great would care for us?”

“How can you say that He cares for us? Look at where we are—hundreds of miles from home with everything we own packed into this car. How can you, of all people, have a good attitude about this?”

“I’m afraid I don’t know what you mean, dear.”

“I mean, you just lost your job, you’re having to move in with Grandma and Gramps because your own parents wouldn’t help you, and Dad doesn’t have any part in your life—or ours! And you’re okay with all of this? It just doesn’t make any sense.”

“No, I suppose it doesn’t much make sense—at least not to people on the outside. You see, as believers we have access to things that others don’t. Because God is love, we can have love for those who hurt and disappoint us. Because Jesus is the Prince of Peace, we can have peace, even when everything is turned upside down, like right now. And because God’s Spirit lives in our hearts, we can have joy in the midst of hardship—because true joy doesn’t depend on our circumstances.” Virginia glanced briefly at Emily and said, “Do you believe these things are true?”

“I know these things are true for you, Mom. But I’m not so sure they’re true for me, at least not yet.”

“Oh, honey, but they are true for you. When Jesus saved you as a little girl, all of the promises in Scripture became true for you too. The Bible is just as true today as it was yesterday or as it will be tomorrow. You can trust God’s Word—because you can trust Him.”

At this, the car became very quiet. Emily tried to choke back the tears that were welling up, but it was no use. One by one they began to trickle down her cheeks. She tried to discreetly reach for a tissue, but it wasn’t enough to fool her mom.

“What’s wrong, sweetheart?” asked Virginia. “Why are you crying? You know you can tell me anything,” she prodded.

“It’s just that I can’t trust God like you do. I want to, but I’m so afraid.”

“What are you afraid of?”

“I don’t know,” she sighed. “I guess I’m just afraid He’s going to let me down. Like when I need him, He’s not going to be there.”

“You mean, like your dad?”

Emily blinked hard and looked down. Her silence was answer enough.

“I guess I’ve never thought about how hard it must be for you to see God as your Heavenly Father since you’ve had such a poor example here on earth. I’m so sorry.”

Emily sniffed and wiped her cheek with the back of her hand.

“You know,” said Virginia, “trust was something that I struggled with too when I first became a believer.”

“It was?” Emily asked, surprised.

“Oh yes, a big struggle.”

“How did you learn to trust God?”

“Well, it was a lot like learning to trust a new friend. You build a relationship with that person, and as you get to know them and find out what they are really like, it just happens naturally.”

“Yes, but that’s with a person. How am I supposed to do that with God? He’s kind of big, you know.”

“The best way is by reading the Bible. That is the main way He communicates with us.”

“But I do that already.”

“Sure, you read the Bible, but *how* do you read it? That’s the question. It’s not enough to just study the Bible—you’ve got to study God in the Bible. There is a big difference.”

“What do you mean?”

“I mean, you’ve got to start looking for Him. Did you know that every line of every verse was written so that we might know God as He is?”

“Really?”

“Yes, it’s true. And when we come to know Him, trusting Him is easy.”

“I guess that makes sense.”

“Try it. I think you’ll be surprised at what you find.”

At that, Virginia turned off the main road onto the gravel drive. “Better wake Sarah up. We’re here.”

Everything around the old farmhouse was dark except a small porch light that had been kept on. At the slamming of the car doors, Grandma and Gramps quickly emerged.

Still groggy, Sarah stretched, yawned, and blinked her eyes a few times and then yelled, “Grandma! Gramps!”

“Come here, you two, and give me a big hug,” Grandma said. “My, my, haven’t you both gotten so big since the last time I saw you, and so beautiful,” she said, looking at Emily.

“Thanks, Grandma. I hardly feel beautiful. We’ve been riding in the car all day.”

“I know, I know. You’ve got to be exhausted. Especially you,” she said, turning to Virginia. Grandma leaned in for a hug and kissed Virginia on the forehead. “Welcome home, sweetheart,” she said. “We’re so glad you’re here.”

“We’re glad too,” said Emily’s mom, fresh tears glistening on her tired face. “Thank you so much for letting us stay with you for a while.”

“Oh, nonsense. That’s what families are for. Let’s grab your bags and get you settled in.”

Grandpa led Emily and Sarah upstairs to the room that they would share—their father’s old room. Pictures, awards, and achievements adorned the walls. All Emily had ever wanted to do was forget her father, and now she was in a place in which she could not escape him.

Sarah threw her blanket on the single bed by the window, climbed in, and was asleep within five minutes. Emily turned off the overhead light and whispered to Sarah, “Sweet dreams.” She climbed beneath the handmaid quilt on the other bed that was to be hers and closed her eyes.



Emily had been lying awake for what seemed like hours. But as tired as she was, she could not sleep. *What is wrong with me?* she thought.

Emily clicked on a small flashlight, pulled her Bible from her backpack, and opened it where her bookmark was placed. Psalm 139. *God, she prayed, If You really are in every verse like my mom says, then help me to see You. I really need to see You—and to know that You see me.*

# Studying Scripture (Part 2)

## Introduction

Have you ever read a passage of Scripture and wondered what you were supposed to be getting out of it? You know there's something there to find—or else God wouldn't have included it in the Bible—but you have no idea what it is. It's kind of like being on a treasure hunt without knowing what the “treasure” is that you are looking for.

So, the question is no longer *why* should we study Scripture, but *how* should we study it. What is the treasure that we are to seek? Is it truths that we can apply to our lives? Principles we should follow? People we should imitate? Though all of these are good things, they aren't ultimately what—or, in this case, whom—we should seek. We want to search for the treasure of all treasures—God Himself. The Bible is, after all, His story, so why wouldn't we be looking for Him?

That means that when we read, we must read with God in mind. It's something like looking at a picture that contains hidden objects. No matter how cluttered the picture may seem, if you focus your attention on finding the hidden objects, they eventually will come into view. The same is true with looking for God in the Bible. God's character and ways are tucked away in every passage of Scripture, just waiting to be found. Are you ready for more from your Bible study? How you study Scripture makes all the difference.

## Session Notes

How Should I Study the Bible?

- \* By looking for God in \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☞ In His \_\_\_\_\_
- \* \_\_\_\_\_ actions
- \* \_\_\_\_\_ actions
  - ☞ In His \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☞ In the \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of others
- \* By uncovering what these actions and words \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☞ About His \_\_\_\_\_
  - ☞ About His \_\_\_\_\_



## Wrapping It Up

### What we've learned

1. Our goal shouldn't be studying the Bible, as much as studying God in the Bible.
2. We can uncover truths about God by observing His actions and words, as well as the actions and words of others.

### This Month's Assignment

Last month you explored some of God's distinct attributes. Now that you know a little bit more about Him, this month's assignment should be much easier.

From this point on, you will have one devotional passage to read each day, five per week. The other two days can be used for personal review. Some passages address multiple themes and may be repeated on different weeks. You will use the same format for the rest of this study, so it is important that you understand how it works from the start.

The format is broken down into three main sections. In the first section you will gather information about God, in the second you will glean important truths from the information you found in Section 1, and in the third section you will identify a verse or passage that sticks out to you, which will be helpful later when we study meditation and memorization. Now, let's further break down each section.

<b>Passage:</b>
What does God do in this passage?
What does God say in this passage?
What do others say about God, and how do they respond to Him?
What does God reveal about Himself through this passage?
How does what I've learned about God impact my life today?
Special verse:

### The First Section

The first section contains the following three questions:

1. What does God do in the passage?
2. What does God say in the passage?
3. What do others say about God, and how do they respond to Him?

Though these questions differ only slightly, each one will provide critical information about God’s character and ways. For this section, read through the text a couple of times, looking for key actions and words that would answer the questions. Then jot down the answers in their proper categories. At this point, don’t worry about quoting verses word for word—explain them in your own words. Be sure to include the reference for the verse in which your answer was found so that you will know where your answers came from.

Let’s look at an example. Read Mark 4:35–41 in your own Bible right now. Then look at the answers provided.

What does God do in this passage?

- Left the crowd and got into a boat (v. 36)
- Fell asleep (v. 38)
- Was awakened by His disciples (v. 38)
- Got up and rebuked the wind and the waves (v. 39)

What does God say in this passage?

- Suggested that they leave the crowd and go over to the other side of the sea (v. 35)
- Rebuked the wind and waves, saying, “Quiet! Be still!” (v. 39)
- Asked the disciples why they were afraid (v. 40)

What do others say about God, and how do they respond to Him?

- The wind and the waves obeyed Him (v. 39)
- The disciples said to each other, “Who is this man? Even the wind and the waves obey His command!” (v. 41)

**Q: When a question refers to “God,” which member of the Godhead does it mean?**

*A: “God” can refer to any member of the Trinity—Father, Son, or Holy Spirit.*

**Q: What if a passage doesn’t have an answer in all three sections?**

*A: When you run into this situation, just cross out the section that you don’t use. Don’t be alarmed—this will happen. In fact, it is rare to find passages that have answers in all three categories.*

**Q: Are the actions described in the first question God’s obvious actions or His behind-the-scenes actions?**

*A: They can be both or either. You will likely see God’s obvious actions in a passage first but may recognize His behind-the-scenes after some further thinking.*

**Q: Do all of my answers have to be in the right order?**

*A: No. While it is nice to have things in their right order, you may see details that you missed initially that you want to include later. In this case, just add them to the end of the list in the appropriate category.*

**Q: What if an answer seems to fit into more than one category?**

*A: Pick the category you think the answer fits best. There is no right or wrong way to answer the questions, and many things will be up to your discretion. However, what you’ve found is important information, so it needs to be included somewhere.*

## The Second Section

The second section contains the following two questions:

1. What does God reveal about Himself through this passage?
2. How does what I’ve learned about God impact my life today?

In order to answer the first question in this section, you will need to review the answers to the questions from Section 1. Consider what can be learned about God’s character (e.g., all-powerful, faithful, loving) and ways (e.g., God’s timing is perfect, God is in complete control, God hears and answers our prayers) from the words and actions you’ve recorded. This list doesn’t need to be in any particular order, nor do you need to include biblical references.

The second question in this section is an application question, connecting what you have learned about God to whatever you are currently facing in life. For instance, if the passage you’ve studied reveals that nothing is difficult for God, then you might apply it by trusting that whatever seemingly impossible situation you are facing is not impossible with Him. There is no right answer to the question. In fact, others may have been impacted by something different than you were. That is because God is working through His Holy Spirit to teach you something uniquely personal.

Let's take a look at what the answers for our sample passage might look like. Keep in mind that these answers are subjective, which means that your answers might be slightly different than the example.

What does God reveal about Himself through this passage?

- He is all-powerful.
- Even the wind and the waves obey His command.
- His words are powerful.
- There is nothing to fear when Jesus is with me.
- God is worthy of my trust.

How does what I've learned about God impact my life today?

- God has the ability to calm the storm I am facing. I need to trust Him and not fear.

## The Third Section

The third section contains a space for you to write down a verse that stuck out to you as you studied the passage. In Lesson 3, this will become the verse you meditate upon, and in Lesson 6, you will memorize the verse you've selected. Again, there is no wrong or right verse to choose. Just pick one that has special meaning to you. Unlike the answers in the other sections, this time you will write the verse down word for word.

Take a look at the sample below.

Special verse:

- Mark 4:39 - And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm.

Now that we've explored how the process works, it's your turn. Are you ready to get started?

Below are this month's passages.

**Week 1: God sees me no matter where I am.**

- Psalm 139:13–16
- Psalm 33:13–15
- Psalm 139:1–3, 7–12
- Jonah 1
- Proverbs 5:21

**Week 2: God sees and judges the evil and the good.**

- Proverbs 15:3
- Psalm 37:12–13
- Genesis 11:1–9
- Psalm 37:39–40
- Genesis 39

**Week 3: God sees the heart.**

- 1 Samuel 16:7b
- 2 Chronicles 16:9
- Psalm 33:18–19
- Psalm 34:15
- Luke 19:1–10

**Week 4: God sees wickedness and repentance.**

- Hebrews 4:13
- Genesis 6:5–8
- Joshua 7:1, 10–11, 25–26
- Jonah 2
- Jonah 3



## WEEK 1 • DAY 1

**Passage:** Psalm 139:13–16

What does God do in this passage?

What does God say in this passage?

What do others say about God, and how do they respond to Him?

What does God reveal about Himself through this passage?

How does what I've learned about God impact my life today?

Special verse.

## WEEK 1 • DAY 2

**Passage:** Psalm 33:13–15

What does God do in this passage?

What does God say in this passage?

What do others say about God, and how do they respond to Him?

What does God reveal about Himself through this passage?

How does what I've learned about God impact my life today?

Special verse.