



DANGEROUS PRAYERS

bible study companion



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BIBLE
STUDIES

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IT CHANGES EVERYTHING.

DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*



Welcome to the *Dangerous Prayers* Bible Study Companion.

My name is Wendy Blight, and I'm the Biblical Content Specialist for Online Bible Studies. This study is all about prayer, so what better way to start our six weeks together than with a prayer?

Heavenly Father, we praise You as our Elohim, God our Creator, our sovereign God, the One who is the King of kings and Lord of lords. You know the name of each woman who will be meeting us here each week in our lessons. You know her doubts, needs and deepest pains. Fall afresh upon her heart. Touch her in deeply intimate ways so she will know she's been in the presence of her Creator, the One who lavishly loves her.

By Your Spirit, equip and enable her to press deeper and go further in her study time with You. Fan the flame in her heart to hunger for more of You, Your Word and Your presence. Move her to renew and deepen her walk with You. Remind her of that first time she felt Your presence, heard Your voice, received Your love.

Fill her with the courage to speak, testify and especially pray more boldly and confidently because of the time she's spent here with You. Thank You that, because of Jesus and His powerful name, Satan has no power over her. He must flee at the very mention of Jesus' name. I pray that as Your Word goes out through these lessons, and the powerful prayers of your beloved daughter, the very ground upon which she stands will be shaken.

Show her Your glory, Lord. Show her Your glory. We thank You that, by the promise in Your Word, You will do exceedingly above all we could ever ask or imagine. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

I can't wait for you to meet the Bible Study Companion team over the course of the next few weeks. So, are you ready for Week 1? Let's go!

With love and prayers,

Wendy

DANGEROUS PRAYERS by Craig Groeschel

Week 1

Bible Study Companion Leader: Stacy J. Lowe



Hey there! I'm so honored to be here with you on the Bible Study Companion today!

This week in our study, we encountered our first “dangerous prayer,” [Psalm 139:23-24](#):

“Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” (NIV)

Some believe David penned and prayed these words around the time he took over leadership of Israel. Pretty good way to start his tenure as king, wouldn't you say?

David's faith didn't remain on a constant high, though. As we'll see, he didn't just fall; he fell spectacularly.

Background

Before we get to David's story, let's go back a bit in time — to before David came on the scene.

God Himself led the Israelites for generations, from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob to Moses to Joshua. A time came, though, when the people looked at the surrounding nations and decided what they had wasn't enough.

Read [1 Samuel 8:4-6](#). What did the people ask of the prophet Samuel?

Are you already sensing a problem here?



Now read [verses 7-9](#). What was God's response?

I know we're not up to David yet, but let's pause for a moment so we don't miss this key point:

While God knew there would one day be a king over Israel, *this wasn't His plan for how and when to go about it.*

Keep that in mind, and we'll come back to it later. In the meantime, though, let's go back to the Israelites.

God warned the people what would happen should they sit under the dominion of an earthly king, but they persisted. God finally gave them what they asked for, and Samuel anointed Saul as the first king over Israel.

Saul started off with good intentions, but he didn't follow after God. Because of this, God declared He would strip the kingdom away from him.

So, who would be the next king? God had already gone before and prepared the way.

God sent the prophet Samuel to the home of a man named Jesse with the instruction that one of his sons was to be anointed the next king.

David Enters the Scene

Still with me? We're coming up to David now.

Upon Samuel's arrival in Bethlehem (where Jesse lived), he invited Jesse and his sons to accompany him as he made a sacrifice to the Lord.

Read [1 Samuel 16:6-7](#). What was Samuel's impression of Eliab, Jesse's oldest son?



What was God's response?

That second part of [verse 7](#) is crucial:

"The Lord doesn't see things the way you see them. People judge by outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (NLT)

From Samuel's description, Eliab looked like a king, but God said he's not the one. In fact, if you read [through verse 10](#), you'll see the same was true for all seven of the sons Jesse presented. NONE were God's chosen.

I imagine this confused Samuel. God had told him to choose the next king from among Jesse's sons, yet he'd met them all, and God had rejected them all. The only logical conclusion was that there must be another son. He asked and learned there *was* one more son, David, who was out tending the sheep. Jesse called him in from the fields, and then God said to Samuel ([verse 12](#)),

"This is the one; anoint him." (NLT)

From Pasture to Palace

A number of years and a number of events later, David finally took the throne, bringing us back to his prayer in [Psalm 139:23-24](#):

"Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (NIV)

It seems David wanted to do right, and he did indeed start off well in his new position as king. But he struggled to remain in that obedient place. There were moments where his connection with God seemed tenuous at best.



We find one of these moments in the book of 2 Samuel Chapters 11 and 12. We’re going to park here for a time and observe David’s behavior along the way, so I encourage you to read these two chapters before we dive in. While you’re reading, invite God to help you identify the mistakes David made that led him down the road to sin and failure.

Reread [2 Samuel 11:1](#). Where did David send the Israelite army?

Copy the last sentence of [verse 1](#) on the line below.

I know we’re stopping just one verse in, but there’s a reason, and it’s this: It was customary at that time for kings to join their troops in battle but, instead of joining the Israelite army as they went off to fight the Ammonites, *David chose to stay behind*.

Mistake #1: He wasn’t where he belonged.

Now read verses [2 and 3](#). What did David do when he noticed a beautiful woman bathing?

Mistake #2: He didn’t turn away.

Not only did he not turn away, David sent someone to identify this woman. She was Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah — one of his soldiers. Warning bells should have been going off in his mind at that moment. Do you think he heard those bells? If not, why? If he heard them, why do you think he didn’t heed them?



Read [verses 4 and 5](#). What happened next?

Mistake #3: He dove headfirst into sin.

Maybe if David had turned away at the first sight of Bathsheba, the story would've ended there, but he *didn't* turn away. He chose to watch, then inquire as to who she was. Then, *fully aware* she was married (as was he), he sent for her, slept with her and got her pregnant.

If this were a made-for-TV movie, this is when the music would begin swelling in a dramatic overture, because what started off as a seemingly innocent glance has turned into full-fledged sin.

As bad as things were, they were about to get even worse.

Read [2 Samuel 11:6-27](#). Summarize what happened next in the space below.



Mistake #4: He tried to cover his sin.

This is where I really want to take David by the shoulders, give him a good shake, and ask, “What were you *thinking?*”

Instead of owning up to his sin and failure, David tried to cover it up. First by bringing Uriah back from war to sleep with Bathsheba. Then, when Uriah acted honorably and refused to sleep with her, by having Uriah killed. David took an already terrible situation and made it infinitely worse.

How could David, this man who prayed such bold words, fall to such a spiritual low?

Had he become lazy in his faith? Had he allowed his relationship with God to grow stale? Did he think he could simply coast on past moments of great faith?

I don’t know, but what I *do* know is this:

If David had been where he was supposed to be, doing what he was supposed to be doing, he wouldn’t have seen Bathsheba bathing. If he had chosen to look away rather than linger when he first spotted her, he wouldn’t have sent for her. If he hadn’t sent for her, he wouldn’t have slept with her. If he hadn’t slept with her, she wouldn’t have become pregnant, and he wouldn’t have gone to such extremes to cover it up.

David made the wrong choice in each of these moments, and because of that, a good and honorable man was now dead.

Read the following passages: [Job 31:4](#), [Proverbs 5:21](#), [Proverbs 15:3](#), [Jeremiah 16:17](#) and [Hebrews 4:13](#). What do you learn from these Scriptures?

While we can sometimes succeed in hiding our deeds from people, we’ll *never* be able to hide them from God. This was a lesson David had to learn.



Read [2 Samuel 12:1-13](#), then copy David’s response to Nathan in [verse 13](#) in the space below.

David was slapped in the face with a dose of reality. That reality allowed him to see his sin for what it was. And, at that moment, two choices lay before him: He could dig his heels even deeper into the muck he’d created, or he could turn back to God.

Read [Psalm 51](#) in its entirety. David wrote this after Nathan confronted him with his sin. Describe his response.

Our Turn

Before we continue, let’s take a few moments to consider our own lives in light of David’s story. Spend some time in self-reflection as you answer the questions below.

How would you describe your current connection with God?

Do you notice a difference in your life when you’re not actively pursuing a relationship with Him?



Are you where you belong? Is there something you know you should be doing, but you're not? What is it?

Are there warning signs in your life you've been ignoring? What are they? What are they warning you against?

How has ignoring past warning signs led to sin in your life?



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Do you try to cover up your mistakes? How does it make you feel? What happens as a result? Do you find yourself closer to God or further away?

What has been your response to identified sin in your own life? Like David, have you turned back to God, or have you continued to choose your own way? Feel free to write out a prayer to God, or copy a few phrases from [Psalm 51](#) that speak to your current place of need.



Unfinished

We've dissected a tumbling series of events in David's life that went from bad to worse. [2 Samuel 11:27](#) (NLT) says "*the LORD was displeased with what David had done.*"

Now check out [1 Samuel 13:14](#) and [Acts 13:22](#). The man referred to in both Scriptures is David. What words do the authors use to describe David?

Not only is this what God had to say about David before all this happened; this is what God had to say about him long after his time on earth was up. In other words, *after* David made a huge mess of things.

In fact, read [Hebrews 11:32-34](#) — part of a passage often referred to as "the Hall of Faith." What does it say about David?

Now read [1 Kings 11:4-6](#) where the author contrasts David's life with that of his son Solomon. What does the passage say about David?

You see, God didn't label David for his sin, because He didn't see David for who he was in that moment; He saw who he could and would become! Remember what we read before? God looks at the heart!

This gives me such hope. No matter how we answered the questions above, we too are an unfinished story. We mess up. We fail. We sin — sometimes epically. But, like David, God doesn't just see who we are in the moment; He sees who we can become, too!



Check out [Philippians 1:6](#), then copy it down below, substituting your own name for the word “you.”

What a beautiful truth!

Final Thoughts

Towards the beginning, we said though God planned for earthy kings, they did not come in the way or in the timing God desired.

But our God is a God of redemption. Not only did He redeem David’s story, He redeemed Israel’s story and *our* story as well. Check this out!

Read [Matthew 1:1](#). Who is the first person listed in Jesus’ line of descendants?

Now consider this:

David, a shepherd from Bethlehem, became king over Israel. Jesus, coming through that *same* line (born in Bethlehem), became the King of kings and our Shepherd! Pretty cool, right? David’s story comes full circle!

As we close today, here are a few takeaways from our time with David:

- Faith is an active and ongoing process. When we become lazy and complacent, our faith can wane.
- When we hear warning bells or notice warning signs, instead of ignoring them, we should take immediate action.
- Even when we fail (as we all do at times), as long as there’s breath in our lungs, it’s not too late! God sees the potential within us and the heart behind it all. All we have to do is turn back to Him.



May David's story of redemption become your *own* story of hope.

Thanks for journeying with me today!

Stacy

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Week 2

Bible Study Companion Leader: Trish Cordell



Hey there! I'm so honored to be here with you on the Bible Study Companion today! My name is Trish Cordell and I adore the Word of God! I enjoy discovering the great treasures found within His Truth, and I believe that *"when we know the Truth, and live the Truth, it changes everything!"*

Who's ready to dive into this week's teaching? I believe I just heard a resounding multitude of women say, "ME." Sweet! This means you're as excited as I am to dig deeper into the Word of God and hear what He has for each of us. Let's get started.

Author Craig Groeschel begins this week's reading with the chapter titled, "Hard Choices." Hmmm. Not exactly a title that evokes the warm fuzzies, is it?

Wouldn't it be much nicer if we could have all the right answers? If we could catch a glimpse of what we should do next and avoid the hard choices altogether? Why can't things be simple and easy?

Boy, oh boy, do I understand. Sigh. But, that's not realistic, is it?

Believe it or not, those hard choices enrich our lives. They give us something tangible to hold onto when we reflect back on the lessons they taught. They give us the momentum to keep moving forward when we feel we can't take another step. They remind us of the faithfulness of God.

I'd love to give you a little glimpse into my story.

A look back.

Last year, I walked through some hard places that threatened to pull me under. Overwhelmed and exhausted, nothing was turning out the way I planned. I wondered, how could that be? I've done all the right things. I spend time with God. I cry out to God. I praise and worship God. I give thanks to God, and I pray — oh, how I pray.



Yet, none of it seemed to be making a difference. I began to question everything I knew about God. Didn't He see my pain and suffering? Didn't He see my heart breaking into a million pieces? My brain knew the answer, but my heart struggled to keep up.

Isn't that the way life goes? The minute things don't fall our way, we question what we know to be true about God's ways.

I had a hard choice. Keep trusting God and His plan or walk away because life got too hard.

Have you ever been there? Wondering if God left you in the wilderness on your own to fend off the wolves?

God Met Me in His Word

[Psalm 13:1-2](#) (ESV) became the cry of my heart.

"How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me? How long must I take counsel in my soul and have sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?"

This word from God helped me realize the lie I had come to believe: God's promises were for everyone but me.

Believing this lie changed me. Anger became my go-to emotion. I mean, little things, like dropping something on the floor, sent me into a full-blown tantrum.

Girlfriends, it was not pretty.

It felt as if everything was spinning out of control. I was over it. I wanted answers, and I wanted them NOW.

The funny thing is, I didn't have to go far. It was right in front of my face. My problem was my focus. I was so focused on my needs and wants, I couldn't see the "control" I craved was the sin that controlled my heart.

In this chapter, Craig tells us that when he asked God to search his heart, God gently led him to see he was a hypocrite.

Yikes, right?



I knew I needed to pray that same prayer if I wanted answers about my anger and why it had taken root in my heart. And, I couldn't demand God answer it in my time. I had to trust His timing. It wouldn't be easy. I invited God to search my whole heart. I confessed my willingness to let go of my need for control so He could reveal the root of that need. Craig's words pierced my heart.

Craig said, *"God showed me that what I feared the most revealed where I trusted God the least"* (Page 40).

This was a crucial step for me in trusting God. My control issue revealed where I was trusting God the least. God used Craig's words to usher me into a new level of trust. But, was I ready?

The fact of the matter is, before I even came to this point in trusting God, He had already shown me He was trustworthy.

To dig a bit deeper into God's trustworthiness, let's study [Psalm 139](#). We're going to have some fun!

Before we get started, let's pray for what we're about to receive.

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your word. May we look upon this time with You as a precious gift to be opened with expectation. May our hearts and minds be softened to receive what You would have us hear. May it grow deep roots and awaken anything that has grown cold. May we lay down anything that would hinder or interrupt our time with You and by the power of Your Holy Spirit may Your word be sealed upon our hearts. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Are you ready?

Digging into Psalm 139

Take a few minutes to read through [Psalm 139](#). May I recommend a quiet place where you won't be interrupted? If you feel comfortable, read the verses aloud. Reading aloud keeps me focused. My mind has a tendency to wander when I read silently.

Once you're done, come on back and we'll take things a bit deeper. I wish you could see the grin on my face. I'm so excited! Please know you can do this at your leisure. Linger in God's Word is the absolute best way to get to know Him. No need to rush. I'll be right here when you're ready for the next step.

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Ready to kick things up a notch? Grab a pen and get comfy. Since you've taken time to read these passages of Scripture, let's really dig in by writing the passages out below.

Let's begin with [Psalm 139, verses 1-6](#). Write the words that stand out to you. There's no right or wrong answer here; simply write what speaks to your heart. And, if it's the entire verse, that's perfectly fine!

Do the same for [verses 7-12](#).

And now, [verses 13-16](#).

Keep going with [verses 17-18](#).



Almost done! [Verses 19:22 are next.](#)

And finally, [verses 23-24.](#)

Look through everything you've written down.

What do these passages teach you about the character of God?

What do these passages show you about how God knows you?

Now, let's revisit the last two verses, [Psalm 139:23-24](#) (ESV).

*“Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts!
And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!”*



Let's also revisit the beginning of this beautiful Psalm, verses 1-6 (ESV). Pay careful attention to verse 1 (bold emphasis added).

“O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, behold, O Lord, you know it altogether. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high; I cannot attain it.”

What do you notice? It's what I so desperately needed to be reminded of, and maybe you feel the same. Even before David asked our Lord to search his heart in verse 23, God had already done so in verse 1. Not only had God searched David's heart, but He knew him and his ways.

Sweet friend, God knows you! He sees you! He knows what you need before you even ask! How can we ever doubt His faithfulness?

The Enemy

I've learned how easily fear creeps in when we wrestle with God through our hard choices or when we feel we've lost control. Fear is a sneaky enemy. But, he is an enemy whom we should not fear. Jesus not only warns us of this enemy, He identifies him.

Read [John 10:10](#)

Who comes to destroy?

Who comes that you may have life?

Do you remember what Craig said about fear?

“God showed me that what I feared the most revealed where I trusted God the least.”

Where Do I Place My Trust?



May I ask you a hard question? Who, what or where are you placing your trust?

Read [Matthew 7:24-27](#).

Who do you believe is the rock spoken of here?

What do you believe is the house that's referenced?

Going a bit deeper, what do you think the rains, the floods and the winds represent in our lives?

The bottom line is this: If we place our trust in anything other than God, it will crumble.

I recently took a trip to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. Many of you may love the beach, but it's not my favorite place to go. I'm not a fan of sand. That stuff gets everywhere! But, this trip was different. God showed up in amazing ways.

Each day I walked on the beach, it was never the same. The changes in the tide from morning to evening captured my attention like it never had before. But, through all the changes on the beach, one thing remained, the ocean roared and the waves danced to its beat. I stood in awe of God's handiwork.

The view from the edge of the shoreline gave me a glimpse of how vast the universe is and how small we are.

I may not be a fan of the sand, but I now realize the great treasures it holds.

One evening, I came upon a sandcastle. Sadly, it had already begun to crumble. In its crumbling, I could see both the beauty and the flaws. [Matthew 7:26](#) came alive before my eyes.

Then, I did the unthinkable. I slowly lifted my foot and crushed the sandcastle back to whence it came. Someone's meticulous craftsmanship, obliterated in an instant.



Sand shifts so easily. It shifts with the movement of the rain, the floods, and yes, even the wind. It shifts under your foot and slips through your hands. It has no stable foundation.

Prayerfully consider this question. Was there a time you placed your trust in someone or something other than God? What was the outcome?

What is your life built upon now? Be honest.

Is your foundation money? Your relationship status? The number of “likes” or followers you have on social media? Maybe it’s another person or your material possessions.

When we build our lives on the things of this world, we will find ourselves standing on shifting sand. None of those things last. They can be lost or taken away in an instant.

Craig said,

“We don’t want God to just show us the impurity of our hearts. We want God to lead us, to direct us, to guide us to become who he wants us to be” (page 55).

How can we expect God to lead, direct and guide us if we’re placing our trust in anything other than God?

As I walked through the trials of last year, I’d like to say I honored God perfectly. But I didn’t. My relationship with God felt more like me on a roller coaster waving frantically and shouting, “Get me off this ride!”

One day, going up the track, thanking God that He was with me. The next, careening down the track, crying out, “Where are you?”

But God! Rather than shoo me away, God invited me in. He drew me closer to His heart and deeper into His Word.



Find Rest in the Midst

[Matthew 11:28](#) (NIV) says:

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”

Coming to Jesus when invited in is the very best feeling. It brings sweet rest and peace.

What does rest look like to you? Whatever it is, know it’s God’s best for you. God designed us for rest. But, we play a part. We have to “Go.” Go to Him and He will give you rest.

Friends, we can either be fear-led or faith-led. We can’t be both. It’s a choice — often a hard choice. Hard because relinquishing control can seem like a scary thing until you realize you were never in control in the first place.

[Proverbs 3:5-6](#) (NIV) says:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”

Lastly, Craig challenges us to:

“Step through your greatest fear and into faith. Embrace your deepest need and let it drive you to depend on Christ” (page 59).

I don’t know about you, but I’m ready to take my faith to the next level. Will you pray this dangerous prayer with me? (bold emphasis added)

“Search me, O God, and know my heart!

Try me and know my thoughts!

And see if there be any grievous way in me,

and lead me in the way everlasting!” ([Psalm 139:23-24](#), ESV)

I’m so thankful for the time we’ve spent together. Next week, the fabulous Nichole Stern will be leading, and you won’t want to miss what she and God have in store for you!

Blessings,

Trish

DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*

Week 3

Bible Study Companion Leader: Nichole Stern



Hi friends! Welcome to Week Three of our Bible Study Companion for *Dangerous Prayers*!

I hope you're enjoying the P31 OBS study as much as I am. *Dangerous Prayers* is definitely challenging me to pray more boldly, how about you?

I'm excited about our BSC for this week, so let's jump right in with our "dangerous prayer,"

"Lord, break me."

Um, yikes. I don't know about you, but this prayer scares me a little.

I don't want to be broken.

I want to be whole, healthy and safe.

However, as we study God's Word, we see that God often uses brokenness to bring about His best for us.

Let's start this week's Bible study by praying through any fear we may feel about the dangerous prayer, "Lord, break me."

It's OK to have some hesitation about asking God to break us ... but let's not allow our trepidation to keep us from trusting God will use our brokenness for His glory.



This week, we'll study one of the greatest influencers in the history of Christianity, the Apostle Paul.

Much of Paul's missionary life was filled with suffering and brokenness, and yet in spite of, or most likely because of this, God used Paul to pen 13 of the 27 books of what we now know as the New Testament of the Bible.

Let me introduce you to the Apostle Paul, who is also known in Scripture by his Hebrew name, Saul. More on this later.

The Pharisee who Persecuted, Imprisoned and Punished Followers of Christ.

Read [Acts 22:1-5](#) and [Acts 7:54-8:1](#).

Check off what you learn about Paul in these passages.

- ☐ **Jewish**
- ☐ **Born in Tarsus**
- ☐ **Brought up/educated in Jerusalem**
- ☐ **Studied under Gamaliel**
- ☐ **Zealous for God**
- ☐ **Persecuted and killed Christians**
- ☐ **Arrested and imprisoned men and women who were followers of Christ**

Prior to his conversion, Paul firmly placed his identity in his pedigree and qualifications. He was a Jew, a Roman citizen and a highly educated Pharisee who zealously sought to arrest, imprison and persecute Christians. In Acts 7:57 and 8:1, we read how Paul stood by and watched in approval as the members of the Sanhedrin stoned Stephen to death. From that day forward, Paul made it his life's work to destroy the Church.

Despite Paul's relentless persecution of God's people, God still used Paul to play an essential part in God's plan for the Church.

Life-Altering Encounter

Read [Acts 9:1-31](#).



What happened to Paul on his journey to Damascus?

How did Paul respond?

Who ministered to Paul after his encounter and why?

Heart check:

How would you respond if God instructed you to love and serve a known persecutor of the Church?

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Read [Matthew 5:43-45](#) and [Luke 6:27-36](#), noting anything in these verses that may change your response to the question above. Did God bring to mind any personal relationships where you might need to apply these verses? What will you do in response to what you've heard?

We've just read one of the most powerful, life-changing stories in all of Scripture. The conversion, call and commissioning of Paul to become one of God's greatest evangelists — an encounter that altered Paul's life forever, and impacted God's Kingdom in ways too numerous to count.

Our encounters with Christ should be life-altering as well.

They most likely won't be as dramatic as Paul's, but that doesn't make them any less significant in God's eyes. Take time to remember and share your life-altering encounter(s) with Christ. And, if you haven't had one yet, how does this story speak to where you are in a decision for Christ?

****Side Note:** Contrary to popular belief, God did NOT change Saul's name to Paul after his encounter with Christ. Saul was Paul's Jewish name. Some scholars believe he may have been named after Saul, the first king of Israel. Paul was Saul's Greek name. Many Greek-speaking Jews in biblical times had Jewish/Hebrew names as well as Greek names.

By Grace Through Faith



Read Paul’s “before and after” story in [Philippians 3:1-9](#) and [1 Timothy 1:12-17](#). What stood out to you in his “before and after” life? Now, share your “before and after” story below. And, if you’d like to take this a step further, share your salvation and “before and after” story with one person this week.

Snake bites, Shipwrecks and Stonings

There’s a common misconception that living a life devoted to following Christ is easy and carefree. Living with this misconception can cause us to question if following Jesus is still worth it when we experience trials, suffering, and heartbreak. The best way to not fall prey to that lie is to consistently spend time in God’s Word. The more we know God’s Word, the more we know God. The more we know God, the more we’ll trust Him.

Paul experienced much suffering AFTER He gave his life to Christ. Yet, it was in that suffering that Paul came to know and trust God. He gained wisdom that only suffering can bring. Read [2 Corinthians 11:16-33](#).

List Paul’s sufferings documented in these verses:



Paul’s life-threatening situations make our struggles seem small and insignificant. Flogged? Shipwrecked? Snakebit? Surely our afflictions can’t compare to what Paul endured.

Please hear me when I say that there is no competition or comparison when it comes to trials and struggles. There is a legitimacy in brokenness, regardless of the cause.

Write [2 Corinthians 12:8-10](#) below:

“Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong” ([2 Corinthians 12:8-10](#) NIV).

Paul pleaded with the Lord to take away his suffering, yet God told him it was in Paul’s weakness that God would display His power.

How about you, friend? Is there something in your life you’ve been begging God to change?



I want to encourage you to pray about how to change your perspective. Instead of begging God to take it away, will you ask Him how you can show His power to the world in the midst of your brokenness?

As I write this, my husband and I are entering year 11 of our infertility battle. Hoping, praying and waiting month after month, year after year; sometimes, the grief is still more than my shattered heart can hold.

I've spent more years than I care to admit asking God why. Pleading with Him to take this struggle from me. I've shed many bitter tears watching everyone else's families grow while I remain barren.

Nothing about this journey has been easy, but I'm learning that when I trust God to use my story for His glory, I can persevere with hope. I'm coming to trust that He will redeem my brokenness and weave it into a beautiful tapestry of His grace, strength and love.

Read [Romans 5:1-5](#).

I find great hope in Paul's words in Romans Chapter 5. First, Paul tells us we receive the gift of peace. Peace with God. The peace that passes all understanding. (Philippians 4:6-7) Second, we receive grace we can stand upon, given to us by Jesus and gained through faith. Grace is God's undeserved favor toward us. This grace is ours. It's a standing grace; we don't have to keep earning it.

We also receive promises about our suffering. Promises we can cling to in times of great despair, disappointment and pain.



DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*

Reread verses 3-5. What does Paul tell us to glory in? Why can we glory in our sufferings?

How might God be using your suffering to produce perseverance, character and hope?

Read [2 Corinthians 4:8-10](#) and [2 Corinthians 4:16-18](#).

Write these passages in your journal, or on a notecard where you can see it when you're in need of some encouragement to keep pressing through.

Our study of Paul would be incomplete without taking a few minutes to talk about his missionary journeys. The book of Acts takes us through each journey: missionary journey number one (Acts 13-14), missionary journey number two (Acts 15:36-18:22), and missionary journey number three (Acts 18:23-21:14). Scholars estimate Paul's travels took him approximately 10,000 miles over a period of nine years. Paul's commitment to his call helped spread the gospel throughout the near east. Understanding his journeys gives us a greater insight into his letters (Romans, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, Timothy, Titus and Philemon).

DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*

We don't have the time to cover Paul's missionary journeys in this BSC, but it's important to know that it was his missionary work that led to his persecution and many imprisonments. But, God. Don't you love those words? God's hand was always upon Paul, through every journey and every imprisonment. Even in the midst of Paul's many periods of imprisonment, God worked in mighty ways.

In Paul's letter to the church in Philippi, we see one example of God using Paul's imprisonment to do His Kingdom work. Read [Philippians 1:12-14](#).

What did God want the Philippian church to know?

How might God be using your life to advance the gospel?

Before we go on to study some of Paul's well-known passages of Scripture, spend time in prayer asking God to use the pain and suffering you're going through for your good and His glory. ([Romans 8:28](#)) Ask Him to help you trust Him in the midst of your struggles. ([Psalm 91:2](#))

DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*

Are you ready to study some Pauline passages with me ... passages written by Paul on his various different journeys? Some of these may be familiar to you and others may not. I invite you to read them with fresh eyes. Invite God to speak to your heart what He has for you this time as you read them and complete the chart below. I started the first one for you.

Scripture	Paul's Teaching
Romans 3:22-24	We are all sinners, no matter who we are or our background. It's only through Jesus' grace that we have right standing before God. It is a gift from God because of His grace.
Romans 8:37-39	
2 Corinthians 1:3-4	
Ephesians 6:10-17	
Acts 16:30-31	
Philippians 4:4-9	



Remember when we first met Paul, before he met Jesus? Paul spent his time striving to keep the law and found his identity in his accomplishments, education and pedigree. It was all about works.

After studying these passages, what has changed since Paul encountered Christ?

What about you? Do you notice a difference when you spend time with Jesus? If you answered yes, explain your answer.

It's all about our identity, isn't it? Paul found his identity in Christ that day on the road to Damascus. When we find our identity in Christ, we no longer have to strive for approval and acceptance. We can rest knowing we are God's children. We can trust that as we build our lives upon the solid rock of the Gospel, even when the storms come (and they will), we can stand firm in His love and the promises and blessings that come with being a child of the one true God.

None too Far

Despite his beginnings, the Apostle Paul's impact on the Kingdom of God is immeasurable.

[1 Timothy 1:15-16](#) illustrates this for us.

"Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so

DANGEROUS PRAYERS by Craig Groeschel

that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life” (NIV).

Jesus saved Paul to display His perfect patience to us. With God, it's never too late! No matter our past, what we've done or what's been done to us, God desires a personal relationship with us. Nothing could ever disqualify us from God's Kingdom. We need only answer the call ... confess our sin and surrender our life to Jesus as our Lord and Savior. What amazing love that God would assure us again and again of His everlasting love and faithfulness.

This is so important I want to say it again.
No one is too far gone for Jesus to save.

Is there someone in your life who seems far from Christ? Write a prayer for them that they too will have a life-altering encounter with Christ and be brought from death to life.

Friend, thank you for spending this week with me. It's been such a joy walking through Scripture with you. My prayer for you as we close this week is from [Romans 15:13](#):

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit” (NIV).

Because of Jesus,
Nichole

DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*

Week 4

Bible Study Companion Leader: Stacy J. Lowe



Hi there, friend!

What do you think of when you hear the word *brokenness*? To me, it feels negative, because to be broken means to be in pieces, rather than the original whole. Now, apply that to being *personally* broken. Who wants *that*?

I think we'd all agree brokenness isn't fun, yet consider this A. W. Tozer quote shared by Craig Groeschel on page 69 of *Dangerous Prayers*:

"It is doubtful whether God can bless a man greatly until he has hurt him deeply."

In other words, sometimes brokenness is a prerequisite to being greatly used by God. Might it then be worth it?

Before we decide, let's take a look at the before and after of someone who knew what it meant to be broken. Even more so, someone who knew what life could be like on the other side of brokenness when it's given over to the One who makes ALL things new. Are you ready? Let's begin!

Before the Brokenness

Of all the people in the New Testament, Peter is among my favorites, because Peter was a man of action. He didn't like to sit still and wait; he wanted to get things done, something I very much relate to!

Prior to knowing Jesus, Peter wasn't actually Peter at all. His given name was Simon, and he was a fisherman. Jesus saw something more in him, though.

Read [John 1:35-42](#).



This new name given to him, which translates as Peter, means *rock*. Why do you think Jesus gave him this new name?

Check out [Genesis 17:1-8](#) and [Genesis 32:22-28](#) to read about two other name changes. Whose names were changed and to what were they changed?

Both of these people went on to live extraordinary lives of faith. Perhaps this change of name was to let them know that life would never be the same — that each of them would no longer be identified with who they used to be, but rather who they would become in God.

Did Peter’s life fit that mold? Let’s keep going and find out.

Read [Mark 1:16-18](#). What was Peter doing when Jesus showed up?

How did he respond to Jesus’ invitation to follow Him?

What did Peter leave behind? What do you think this represents?

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Remember, Peter had been a fisherman, but when he chose to follow Jesus, he didn't pack up his nets and take them along just in case. Not only that, Peter acted upon this invitation *immediately*, meaning he walked away not only from his career, but from the comfortable familiar life he had known, all in an instant, all at the invitation of Jesus. I told you he was a man of action!

What about Jesus do you think compelled such an immediate response?

Are you just as quick to obey? Why or why not?

Walking with Jesus

Peter witnessed many miracles as he walked with Jesus, including: the healing of his mother-in-law ([Matthew 8:14-15](#)) and Jesus raising a dead girl back to life ([Matthew 9:18-26](#)), calming a storm instantly ([Matthew 8:22-27](#)), and feeding thousands from just five loaves of bread and two fish ([Matthew 14:13-21](#)). Each one done at Jesus' command.

Then there was this: [Matthew 14:22-33](#). Give it a read, then answer the questions below.

What did Peter ask of Jesus to prove it was really Him, and how did Jesus respond?



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At this response, Peter jumped out of the boat and stepped onto the waves, but he didn't stay there. What changed in Peter that took him from walking on the water to sinking beneath it?

Peter focused on the wind swirling about him, rather than the One he had already seen command the wind and the waves. The moment Peter cried out, though, Jesus immediately reached out and grabbed him, then asked an important question.

What did He ask, and how would you answer that same question today, especially as it relates to brokenness in your life?

Now let's jump ahead just a bit to [Matthew 16:13-19](#). Who did Peter say Jesus was, and what did Jesus then reveal about Peter's future?

After seeing miracles, being an instrument by which one happened, then doing the impossible himself, it seems Peter's faith should have been unshakable. After all, he was the disciple who spoke up *without hesitation* to announce the deity of Jesus ([Matthew 16:16](#)), yet as we'll see just a couple verses later, he still didn't get it.



Jesus began to more plainly speak to the disciples about what was going to happen to Him. While Matthew doesn't provide insight into what the other disciples were thinking, with Peter, we get a front row seat.

Read [Matthew 16:21-23](#).

The NIV translation says that Peter began to “rebuke” Jesus for His words. The Hebrew word for “rebuke” in this verse is more like an admonishment. Almost like, “surely not, Lord.” Jesus was ready with a shocking response, though, and told him ([v. 23 NIV](#)):

“Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

Jesus then went on to address the other disciples as well ([v. 24-26](#)):

“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it. What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?”

This directive applies to us as well. What do you think it means to take up your cross and follow Him? How does this relate to brokenness?

Taking up our cross is a daily decision to surrender our will to that of Christ's — to follow Him forward even when it's hard or doesn't make sense, even if it leads us into brokenness. It's entrusting ourselves fully to Him. This is what Jesus was calling the disciples (and us) to do.



In the chapters that follow, Jesus performed miracles, taught, preached and further prepared the disciples for what was to come. Then, after revealing that one among them, Judas, would betray Him, they began making their way to the Mount of Olives.

Read [Matthew 26:31-35](#). What did Jesus say Peter would do, and what was Peter's response?

Later that same night, they arrived at the Garden of Gethsemane. Jesus, in anguish over what was soon to come, asked Peter, James and John to keep watch while He went off to pray. Instead, they fell asleep. Jesus woke them and again asked them to stay up, but again, they nodded off. Leaving them asleep, Jesus went off to pray once more, before coming back to announce the time had come.

Read [Matthew 26:47-56](#).

Take a moment to read John's account of this same event ([John 18:1-11](#)). You'll notice John identified Peter as the disciple who cut off the soldier's ear. Maybe Peter thought he was protecting Jesus. Maybe he thought he had something to prove, since Jesus had predicted he would deny Him. Or maybe this was just Peter's impulsivity on display. Whatever the reason, Jesus rebuked his actions and allowed the soldiers to do what they had come for.

Let's return to Matthew's account of these events in Chapter 26, [verse 56](#) (NIV):

"Then all the disciples deserted him and fled."

Read [verses 57 and 58](#). Despite having run off with the other disciples, what was Peter doing?

Now read [verses 69-70](#).

Denial #1.



[Verses 71-72.](#)

Denial #2.

And finally verses [73-74a](#).

Denial #3.

Now read [verses 74b-75](#) (NIV):

“Immediately a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered the word Jesus had spoken: ‘Before the rooster crows, you will disown me three times.’ And he went outside and wept bitterly.”

Shattered

If you’re unfamiliar with the crucifixion story, or maybe it’s been a while, take a few moments to read [Matthew 27:11-54](#).

Now, put yourself in Peter’s shoes. He had been Jesus’ close friend and follower since early in His ministry. Peter had witnessed many miracles and had promised to remain loyal. Yet, the moment his friend needed him the most, he pretended to not even know Him. Not only that, this Jesus who Peter had walked away from everything for, and on Whom he had pinned all his hopes and dreams, was now dead. How do you think you would have felt if you were Peter?

I think *broken* is the only word to describe it.

Have you experienced that level of gut-wrenching brokenness in your life? How did you face it?



While brokenness can be caused by others, sometimes it's of our own making, as was the case with Peter. Do you think that makes a difference in how, or even *if*, our brokenness can be used?

Keep those thoughts in mind as we continue on in our story.

Jesus' body was broken for us in death, but He didn't stay in the tomb long ([Matthew 28:1-10](#))! After the resurrection, He appeared in the flesh several times to Peter and the other disciples. One of these accounts appears in John 21.

Read [John 21:1-14](#).

What was Peter doing when Jesus arrived?

Yep, just like when Jesus first called him! He and the other disciples had been fishing all night and caught nothing. And then a stranger showed up and told them to throw their net on the opposite side of the boat. Peter obeyed. Suddenly, fish filled their net so full they couldn't haul it in! It was then Peter realized this stranger on the shore was no stranger at all; it was Jesus. Just like before, Peter abandoned his net, this time jumping in the water and swimming ashore in a *desperate* attempt to get to Jesus.



[John 21:15-17](#) then provides an interesting back-and-forth between Jesus and Peter.

What question did Jesus ask Peter, and how many times did He ask it?

The number of times Peter had denied knowing Jesus was the *same* number of opportunities now given him to openly express his love for Him!

Then came [verses 18-22](#) (NIV) (emphasis my own):

*“Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, **‘Follow me!’***

*Peter turned and saw that the disciple whom Jesus loved was following them. (This was the one who had leaned back against Jesus at the supper and had said, ‘Lord, who is going to betray you?’) When Peter saw him, he asked, ‘Lord, what about him?’ Jesus answered, ‘If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must **follow me.**’”*

This is what I hear in those words:

Peter, if you follow Me, life isn’t going to be easy for you, but follow Me anyway. Don’t look to the left or the right or at what everyone else is doing. Keep your eyes on Me alone, and we’ll do this together. Just follow after Me.

It all started with a simple invitation to follow Jesus, and now, on the other side of complete brokenness, there was Jesus again, restoring Peter and reaffirming that his invitation hadn’t been rescinded at all. (Side note - Neither has yours!)

A Life Restored

In the midst of his brokenness, Peter could’ve decided he was done — that it was too hard, he’d already screwed up, he was a failure, and that was that. He could’ve washed his hands of the whole thing and gone back to his old life as a fisherman, but he didn’t.

DANGEROUS PRAYERS by Craig Groeschel

Instead of holding his broken pieces close, He gave Jesus access to each and every one. Because of his willingness to surrender, God was able to use Peter in a *mighty* way!

In [Acts 1:12-26](#), we find Peter already stepping up as a leader among the disciples. Let’s walk through Acts 2, 3, 5, 9 and 10 to see what happened after Jesus’ death and resurrection, gain insight into Peter’s role in those early days and study a few of Peter’s powerful ministry and leadership moments. I know it sounds like a chunk of reading, but we’ll take it step by step.

First, take a few minutes to read [Acts 2:1-41](#), remembering the fear Peter lived in shortly before then.

Describe the “new” Peter.

Now read each passage below, filling in the chart with Peter’s actions.

VERSE(s):	ACTIONS:
Acts 3:1-11	
Acts 5:12-16	
Acts 5:26-29	
Acts 9:32-42	
Acts 10:34-38	



Y'all, I could go on and on with this! That same man who just didn't get it before — the one who rebuked Jesus, who impulsively sliced off a man's ear, who hid in the shadows hoping no one would recognize him — THAT man is the SAME man who went on to boldly preach the gospel, perform miracles and lead *thousands* to Christ.

And then there's this, shared on page 100 of *Dangerous Prayers*:

"When the enemies of Christ wanted to crucify Peter on a cross, tradition tells us that he said he was unwilling to die as his Savior died. Instead, he asked to be crucified upside down. The same man who cowered in fear stood boldly in faith. He was a different man."

Peter had been broken, yes, but God didn't write, "The end," and close the book on him. In fact, He *never* closes the book on our brokenness. Instead, He invites us to turn the page with Him, grab hold of His hand and allow Him to begin writing a brand new chapter with *Him* in the lead.

Peter accepted this invitation, and his life was never the same again!

Is there a brokenness in your life you've been trying to hide from? What do you stand to lose if you give those pieces over to God like Peter did?

On the flip side, what do you possibly stand to gain?



DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*

Peter's life is a powerful testament to what can happen when we give ourselves fully over to Jesus and allow those moments of brokenness to propel us into a future of being used by Him in ways greater than we *ever* could have imagined!

So now, going back to the question from page one of today's study, do you think the brokenness is worth it? Will you trust God with your brokenness and accept His invitation to begin a new chapter with Him? Use the space below to journal your thoughts or to write a prayer of surrender to God.

One last note. Before Jesus ever invited Peter to follow Him, before He renamed him and spoke words of greatness over his life, He already knew what lay ahead ([Psalm 139:16](#), [Psalm 147:5](#), [Romans 11:33](#)). He knew the choices and mistakes Peter would make. Yet, Jesus still called Peter to be the first of many to build His church.

Peter's name means "rock." And Peter lived up to that name. God used Peter greatly in building the foundation of the early church. Peter was the first to proclaim the Gospel ([Acts 2:14-47](#)). He was the first to take the Gospel to the Gentiles (non-Jews, [Acts 10:1-48](#)). He was one of God's first missionaries!



You see, God didn't disqualify Peter from being His instrument of salvation, because while He knew the brokenness that would come with the call, He also knew the strength and greatness that would follow. He sees it in you, too, friend. You just have to surrender your broken pieces into His hands.

Praying for you!

~Stacy

DANGEROUS PRAYERS by Craig Groeschel

Week 5

Bible Study Companion Leader: Katrina V. Wylie



Hi there! You being here with me brings a smile to my face. It means you yearn to go deeper. You want to be a woman who raises her hand and says, “*Here I am. Send me, God.*” It’s scary, I know. But I’m proud of you for taking this step. We can do this together. We can do this with God. We CAN, friend! Let’s look at how.

Knowing Leads to Willing

Think of someone you know well. Someone you trust, highly respect, find it easy to honor and who amazes you in some way ... Now think of someone you don’t know as well. Someone you don’t find easy to trust, respect or honor ... If each of these people asked you to do something that felt scary/hard/undesirable, who are you more likely to say “yes” to?

Seems like a simple answer when put that way, doesn’t it? But, what about when it’s God who does the asking? Why is our response to Him not always an easy, “*Yes, God. Send me.*”? In our *Dangerous Prayers* study book this week, Craig Groschel addresses this:

“This type of dangerous prayer of submission is not easy to pray, especially if you don’t have a deep trust and reverence for God. But when you do get to know God, his character, his nature, his holiness, you become more willing to offer this prayer. In fact, when you experience God for who he really is, you will actually enjoy praying with such vulnerability.” p. 117-118

“...enjoy praying with such vulnerability.” Yes, that’s where we want to be! Don’t miss what gets us there, though. It’s *knowing and experiencing God* that makes us more willing.

Where are you currently with your willingness to pray, “send me”? Are you more like: Jonah (in [Jonah 1:3](#)), whose reaction to God’s request basically expressed, “*I’m not going,*” Moses (in [Exodus 3:11](#)), who essentially responded to God, “*Who am I? Send someone else,*” or Isaiah (in [Isaiah 6:8](#)), who answered God’s call with a clear, “*Here I am. Send me.*”? Explain.

DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*

I tend to relate most to Moses. My natural, initial response when God calls is often, “*Who, me? Surely there is a better, more qualified choice.*” There have been times I’ve allowed those thoughts to then lead me to an “unwilling Jonah” response, only to watch in regret as another who is chosen steps up to the plate. BUT, there are also times my “Moses likeness” converts to “Isaiah confidence” ... *when I intentionally place my focus on who God is.*

Where do you tend to place your focus when God calls? Circle all that apply.

- On myself/own abilities
- On my situation/circumstance
- On what others say
- On who God is

On a scale of 1-10, how would you rate your current level/depth of knowing God? Why?

How much time do you spend with God, and what do you do during that time to know Him better?

Over the years, I’ve become familiar with some of God’s attributes by studying the Bible on my own, doing women’s Bible studies and through church sermons. Other attributes I’ve come to know personally as I’ve experienced God in my circumstances and day to day life. Then there are attributes about which I’m still learning.

I imagine the same is true for you and that’s okay! Coming to fully know God is a life-long journey. One that, on this side of heaven, we never complete. But we *do* want to take steps to draw near to Him, so we can grow to know and trust Him more. Let’s pray for that now.



God, we are here to seek You and know You more. We want to be able to say, “Send me!” with vulnerability and without hesitation when You call. We know that confidence begins with knowing and trusting You. We believe Your Word to be true — that we will find You as we seek You (Jeremiah 29:13) and You will draw near to us as we draw near to You (James 4:8a). Thank You for meeting us here and revealing more of Yourself to us through this time together. We love You and are excited to know You more. In Jesus’ name, amen.

The Attributes of God - Gaining Greater Insight Into Who God Is

Before we dig into the attributes of God, let’s first define “attribute.” An attribute is a quality or feature regarded as a characteristic or inherent part of someone or something. Attributes of God are characteristics that identify God. In other words, they are the features and qualities that help us understand who He truly is.

Read through the attributes of God in the chart below. Put a checkmark by the words that speak to how you know God personally. Put a star next to the words that speak to how you’d like to know Him more.

Infinite (Colossians 1:17)	Unchanging (Hebrews 13:8)	Eternal (Psalm 102:12)
Omnipotent (Jer. 32:17)	Omnipresent (Jer. 23:23-24)	Omniscient (Psalm 139:1-10)
Self-existent (John 1:1-5)	Self-sufficient (Acts 17:24-25)	Transcendent (Isaiah 55:8-9)
Sovereign (1 Chr. 29:11-12)	King (Psalm 47:6-7)	Lord (Psalm 83:18)
Father (1 John 3:1)	Creator (Colossians 1:16)	Healer (Exodus 15:26)
Savior (Psalm 25:5)	Deliverer (Psalm 140:7)	Refuge (Psalm 59:16)
Righteous (Psalm 119:137)	Merciful (Titus 3:5)	Faithful (Deuteronomy 7:9)
Forgiving (Hebrews 8:12)	Gracious (Ephesians 2:8)	Comforter (2 Cor. 1:3)
Advocate (1 John 2:1)	Helper (Psalm 118:7)	Provider (Genesis 22:14)
Holy (Revelation 4:8b)	Wise (Romans 11:33)	Good (Psalm 34:8)
Love (1 John 4:7-8)	Peace (1 Thessalonians 5:23)	Light (Psalm 27:1)

(Note: this is not meant as a complete list of attributes and verses, but rather as a solid starting point to begin to further explore and better understand who God is.)

Now, I’ll share a few practical steps we can take to more deeply understand these attributes:

- Look up the definition and synonyms of an attribute.
- Read, study and memorize scriptures that specifically relate to an attribute.
- Pray and/or personalize the scriptures you find.
- Recognize and remember when you personally experience an attribute of God.



Let's work through some of the attributes now! I've started a few steps for some of them to get you rolling.

Attribute: Omnipotent

Definition/Synonyms: having unlimited power; able to do anything (all-powerful, almighty, supreme, most high, preeminent, invincible, unconquerable)

Verse: *"Ah, Sovereign LORD, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you." Jeremiah 32:17 (NIV)*

My Thoughts/Prayer/Personalization: *LORD, You are supreme. You made the heavens and earth by Your great, unlimited, almighty power and outstretched arm. You are able to do anything. Nothing is too hard for You. I pray that You would help me recognize and remember all the specific ways and times I've experienced Your power in my life, and that my trust in You would grow as a result. Thank You for all the ways You've worked Your power in and through me and my circumstances. I give You all the glory. In Jesus' name, amen.*

How/When I've Personally Experienced God's Omnipotence:

I see God's power when I marvel at His creation — Mt. Rainier, the ocean, sunsets and storms! I experienced His power when I quit my job and felt it was impossible to not go back to work. Against all odds, He continually made a way for one income to be more than enough, even to become debt free! His power was undeniable in how He brought me up out of my pit of darkness and led me to serve in P31 OBS!



Attribute: Omnipresent

Definition/Synonyms: widely or constantly encountered; present everywhere (universal, worldwide, global, all-present, prevalent, predominant, extensive, wide-ranging, far-reaching)

Verse: *“‘Am I only a God nearby,’ declares the LORD, ‘and not a God far away? Who can hide in secret places so that I cannot see them?’ declares the LORD. ‘Do not I fill heaven and earth?’ declares the LORD.” Jeremiah 23:23-24 (NIV)*

My Thoughts/Prayer/Personalization:

How/When I’ve Personally Experienced God’s Omnipresence:



Attribute: Omniscient

Definition/Synonyms: knowing everything (all-knowing, all-wise, all-seeing)

Verse: *"Great is our LORD and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit." Psalm 147:5 (NIV)*

My Thoughts/Prayer/Personalization:

How/When I've Personally Experienced God's Omniscience:



Use this page to continue to dig into more attributes. Print as many copies of this page as you want/need, according to the time you have.

Attribute:

Definition/Synonyms:

Verse:

My Thoughts/Prayer/Personalization:

How/When I've Personally Experienced This Attribute:



How has studying these attributes of God impacted your willingness to pray, “Send me”?

Continuing to Seek to Know God

Remember, friend, truly and deeply knowing God takes time and consistent, intentional seeking. Congrats to you for taking a big step toward this today! It’s my hope and prayer that your seeking to know God better through our time together has made you more aware of His presence and ignited a greater sense of awe and trust in who God is and how He personally watches over you and longs to be in relationship with you.

Don’t stop here, though! On the next page, you’ll find a list of bonus activities to help you discover more of the rich treasures waiting for You in God’s Word as you seek to know Him more. Consider choosing one to do this week. Or, save the list and come back when time allows.

I’ve enjoyed this time with you,
Kat



DANGEROUS PRAYERS *by Craig Groeschel*

Bonus Activities

1. **Spend one week studying the attributes of God.** Choose one attribute each day to read/pray/personalize. OR, if you're feeling really ambitious, do it for a month!
2. **Do a word search on one or more attributes of God.** Find, read, pray and personalize even more verses on your favorite attribute (or your top three or five). Below, I've included three ways to search for attributes:
 - a. Look up an attribute in your concordance (found in the back of most Bibles).
 - b. Go to BibleGateway.com and type an attribute in the search box.
 - c. In your Google search box, type "Bible verses on (insert specific attribute)."
3. **Start an "attribute" journal.** Add to it as you read your Bible and as you go about your days. Record: specific attributes, applicable verses, things you learn, your thoughts, prayers and personal experiences that apply.
4. **Spend time outdoors.** Watch and listen for God to show and reveal Himself to you through His creation. Journal which attributes come to mind and in what ways.
5. **Schedule a worship time.** Select songs that help you draw near to God. Journal during and/or afterwards about the qualities of God He reveals and speaks to you.

DANGEROUS PRAYERS by Craig Groeschel

Week 6

Bible Study Companion Leader: Katrina V. Wylie



Hello again! It's good to be back with you! I'm proud of you for seeing these companions through to Week 6. Together, we'll continue to look at the "send me" prayer. I pray your dedication and efforts are met with the rich blessings that come as a result of time spent with God in His Word. Let's dig in!

Two Keys to Praying "Send Me":

In our study book, *Dangerous Prayers*, Craig Groeschel reveals two important keys to praying "send me":

*"...this isn't a one-time dangerous prayer you pray and then you go on with your life. This is another prayer of **daily submission** to God."* p. 133 (emphasis added)

The first key is *daily*. Just like "search me" and "break me," we're meant to pray "send me" over and over. It's intended to be a *daily lifestyle* for those of us in Christ.

Key #1: "Send me" is meant to be a *daily* prayer.

It doesn't end there, though. To pray "send me" daily is not enough. It only becomes effective with *submission to God*. We have to let go of our will in exchange for God's.

Key #2: To effectively pray "send me," *submission to God's will* is required.

To "*submit*," according to Google, means to "*accept or yield to a superior force or to the authority or will of another person.*" Some synonyms are: "*give way, relent, defer, agree, consent, accede, comply, surrender.*"

How are you currently with accepting and yielding to God's will *daily*? If your answer doesn't sit well with you, you're not alone! Here's the good news, though —we can grow in our submission to God when we personalize and implement the "send me" prayer in our everyday life. In chapter 3.7 of *Dangerous Prayers*, Craig gives us a practical way to do so: to devote (or submit) specific parts of our body to God daily through prayer.



Have you ever started your day with a prayer to devote your whole body to God — your mind, eyes, ears, mouth, heart, hands and feet? I’ve prayed to devote myself and/or my day to God in general. However, it’s never crossed my mind to pray that specifically that often.

To help us personalize and implement the “send me” prayer, let’s look at what God’s Word says about our bodies.

Devoting Our Whole Body to God:

There are several places where the Bible makes clear *every* part of creation belongs to God. Here’s one example:

“To the LORD your God belong the heavens, even the highest heavens, the earth and everything in it.” Deuteronomy 10:14 (NIV)

“Everything” includes us — our *entire* bodies, from our head to our toes, our mind to our souls! Shouldn’t this mean God has the right to use them how/when He deems fit?

All the way back to the very first book in the Old Testament, from the beginning of creation, it’s made evident God intends our bodies to be used for His purposes:

“Then God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground.’” Genesis 1:26 (NIV 84)

We were created to care for God’s creation — to “rule over” it daily. But, that’s just one purpose for which we’re to use our bodies. The New Testament opens our eyes to further purposes.

Look up 1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Romans 12:1 and Philippians 1:20. What do they teach about our bodies and how we are to use them for God’s purposes?

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Our bodies are not our own. Christ paid the price for them when He hung and died for us on the cross. We are to take care of them, so we can use them to honor God. Like Christ, though, giving our bodies to be used by God for His purpose and Kingdom requires sacrifice. While we don't have to physically hang on a cross (praise God!), we are called to "hang our will" on the cross daily, so to speak.

Google defines "*sacrifice*" as "*an act of giving up something valued for the sake of something else regarded as more important or worthy.*" Some synonyms are: "*surrender, renouncing, forfeiture, yielding, ceding, waiving.*"

What specifically do YOU need to "hang on the cross" to devote your body to God?

The verses and definitions we've looked at help me personally realize/remember:

- I've never really thought to ask God how *He specifically* wants me to care for His creation each day. I need to hang my to-do list on the cross and begin to seek God's guidance for how He'd have me care for His creation daily.
- The health of my body affects my ability to be used by God. I need to hang some of my sedentary habits and my "convenience eating mindset" on the cross to keep God's temple healthy, so I can more effectively be used for His purposes daily.

Did you notice I mentioned "thought" and "mindset"? So often to devote ourselves to God starts with our mind! Let's look closer at what God's Word teaches about the mind.

Devoting Our Mind to God:

The Apostle Paul had these firm words for the Ephesians in regards to their minds:

"So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking." Ephesians 4:17 (NIV)



Several translations use the word “futility.” It’s not a word I use regularly, so I did **three things to gain more insight:**

1. **I looked up additional translations.** The NLT uses the words “*hopelessly confused*” and the KJV says “*the vanity of their mind.*”
2. **I searched the word in the original Greek.** “Futile” derives from the Greek word, *mataiotés*, which means *vanity, emptiness, purposelessness*.
3. **I Googled the definition.** “*Futility*” is defined as “*pointlessness or uselessness.*” Some synonyms are: “*vanity, ineffectiveness, inefficacy, failure.*”

The Apostle Paul doesn’t paint a pretty picture of the mind here. It’s important to know, though, Paul is talking about Gentiles in verse 17. Unbelievers. Those who do not believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior. The mind of a person who has not given her life to Jesus. It’s the *unsaved mind* that’s “hopelessly confused.”

What about for the believer, for those of us who have given our lives to Jesus, who have a saved mind — what picture does Paul give of our minds? To answer this question, let’s walk step-by-step through the verses that precede and follow verse 17 in Ephesians 4. Note: I used the NIV translation. If you’re using another translation for this activity, you may find it helpful to pull up [Ephesians 4 in NIV on Biblegateway](#).

Read Ephesians 4:1-3. List what Paul says to do/be. Circle any you personally need to pray for daily.

- To live ...
- To be ...
- To bear ...
- To make ...

Read verses 7-8. What does Christ give us?

- G
- G

Read verse 11. List the four specific “offices” within the church. Hint: the last two are considered one office.

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



These are very specific church offices that Paul lists. God-ordained offices. Offices He gives for specific purposes we'll study below.

Read verses 12-13. What is the purpose of these offices?

- To equip us for ...
- So the body of Christ may be ...
- So we reach ...
- And become ...
- And attain ...

Read Ephesians 4:14-16. What is the result when the church offices and the body of Christ fully work effectively in their roles?

- We'll no longer ...
- Instead we'll ...

These verses leading up to verse 17 speak to the building up of the Church so that it operates in unity and strength under God's protection and supervision. God desires a mature body of Christ that will reflect His Light and Love to the world by their words and in their actions. This only happens as we, "the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work." v. 16

Read verses 17-19. How are those who "live in the futility of their thinking" described?

It's clear, as believers, we are to no longer live in the futility of "their" (Gentile/nonbeliever) thinking, with "darkened" understanding, separated from God. But, how are we specifically to live differently? Beginning in verse 20, Paul gives instructions on how believers are to live. Aren't you glad God doesn't leave us to figure it out on our own?

Read verses 20-24. How are we taught to live instead? What enables us to do so?

- To put off ...
- By being made new in ...
- To put on ...



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It all comes down to where/what we devote our minds to! Romans 12:2 (NIV) sums it up well:

“Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Friend, if we want to effectively pray “send me,” we need to first *submit* to God’s will and then *respond* to God’s will. But in order to respond to God’s will, we need to be able to *perceive* His will. And to perceive His will, requires our mind to be *devoted* to the One who can transform our mind. Are you motivated yet to *daily* pray to devote your mind to God?

For further inspiration, look up Isaiah 26:3, Romans 8:6, 1 Corinthians 2:16, 2 Corinthians 10:5 and Colossians 3:2. Record what you learn.

Based on what you know and have learned about the mind, what specifically do YOU need to devote to God through daily prayer?

As powerful as it is to devote our minds to Christ, we can’t stop there! Praying “send me” also includes devoting our *hearts* to God.



Devoting Our Heart to God:

Did you know there are over 1,000 references to the heart in the Bible? It's important to note they don't speak to our physical hearts — the muscle that pumps blood through our body. Rather, when Scripture references the heart, it generally refers to the place where emotions and desires begin. It's what drives our will, our words and our actions. It's our inner being — our emotions ([Proverbs 14:10](#), [John 14:1](#), [Romans 9:2](#)), intellect ([Proverbs 16:1](#), [Psalm 90:12](#), [1 Kings 3:9-12](#)) and moral makeup ([Genesis 6:5](#), [Psalm 58:2](#), [Romans 1:24](#)). In other words, Scripture relates our hearts to our souls.

Let's continue in Ephesians 4, along with some additional scriptures, to learn more.

Re-read Ephesians 4:17-19. Again, to whom is Paul referring when he writes "they"?

What word does Paul use to describe the state of their heart? (v. 18)

What are the consequences of having a "hardened heart"? (vv. 18 and 19)

Biblically, what is a "hardened heart?" The word *hardened* in Greek is *porosis*, which is from the word *poros* and means *a stone harder than marble*. Medically, it refers to a loss of power and sensation — so much so, the person is left with no feeling at all. In relation to the human heart, "hardening" is a process that happens over time as the person continually gives into sinful desires, until they become completely unaware of or "hardened" to sin.

The words Paul uses in Ephesians to describe the hardened heart are harsh, but these words do not describe a saved child of God. We're not like the Gentiles. As we learned above, for believers, the old is gone and the new has come. We have saved hearts. Renewed hearts. Hearts that are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who equips and empowers us to fight the temptations that lead us down sin-filled paths.



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We also have an enemy of our souls who seeks to take us back to places of sin and darkness. To arouse emotions like greed, lust, bitterness, anger, unforgiveness. It's easy in today's culture to fall prey to negative emotions and selfish desires. But, Paul gives clear guidelines to walk in to ensure we don't go back to the old ways and, instead, walk in the fullness of our new identity. God's Word gives us hope and direction to help us stand firm.

Read Luke 21:34 and Proverbs 4:23. What do they tell us to do and why?

The Bible warns us to be careful and guard our hearts because God knows the things of this world will press in and threaten to trip us up. He knows the temptation to sin depends upon the condition of our hearts. If we're not careful to guard our hearts, we'll struggle to live fully devoted lives led by fully devoted hearts.

What is weighing your heart down? What specifically do you need to be careful of and pray to guard your heart from daily?

For me, it's the "anxieties of life" that Paul speaks directly to in Luke 21:34. So often, it's not the big stuff that keeps me from daily devoting my heart to God's will, though the big things definitely can and do. It's more the small, everyday stuff that most often weighs upon my heart. It's those little, everyday things I need to pray daily to guard my heart from.

The Bible not only tells us to be careful, it also instructs us what to do with our hearts.

Look up and list what each verse instructs us to do with our heart. Circle those you personally need to pray for daily.

- Proverbs 23:26 -
- Proverbs 3:5 -
- Acts 11:23 -
- Deuteronomy 6:5 -
- Psalm 9:1 -



Friend, a heart surrendered to God, trusts and remains true to Him, loves and gives thanks to Him — THAT is a heart He is able to work in and soften. THAT is a heart devoted to God.

But we're still not done! The heart isn't the only part of our body we're warned to guard.

Devoting Our Mouth to God:

In Proverbs 21:23 (NIV), we learn there is also benefit to guarding our mouth:

“Those who guard their mouths and their tongues keep themselves from calamity.”

If you're like me, this may be the hardest body part to control. My mouth gets me in trouble more than I'd like to admit. God clearly knew this about His children because it's a frequently addressed topic in the Bible, and for a good reason! *Calamity* in Greek translates to *distress, trouble, adversity and affliction*. Don't we all want to keep ourselves from calamity?

One great way to guard our mouths is simply to *hold our tongues* ([Proverbs 10:19 and 17:28](#)). To think before we allow a word to pass our lips, especially when we're challenged, offended or angry. Another way is to *not tell lies* ([Proverbs 12:19, Psalm 34:13, 1 Peter 3:10](#)). Truth-telling protects us from the pain and adversity of getting caught in a lie. These are both good practices to keep our mouths from evil. Scripture doesn't end there, though. It gives further instruction on how to use our mouths as well.

Look up Proverbs 12:18, 15:1-2, 31:26 and Colossians 4:6. List the ways God instructs us, as believers, to use our mouths. Circle those you personally need to pray for daily.

Ephesians 4 also provides instructions for our mouth.

Read Ephesians 4:25-27 and 29. List what Paul instructs us to do and *not* do with our mouth. Circle any you personally need to pray for daily.

- To do ...
- *Not* to do ...



What happens when we lose our temper and speak angry words that lead to sin? (v. 27)

Did you see that word “foothold”? Your Bible may use another word like “opportunity.” This derives from the Greek word *topos*, which means *a place, opportunity, power*. Google’s definition expands on this: *“a secure position from which further progress may be made.”*

Who do we want to have a “secure position” to make “further progress” in our lives — the enemy or God? To whom do we want to give a position of power in our lives? The choice is ours. If we want it to be God, then we need to heed Paul’s warnings in Ephesians. If we don’t, Paul warns of another consequence.

Read Ephesians 4:29-32.

What does it mean to “grieve” the Holy Spirit? To “*grieve*” in general means “*to cause sorrow, pain, or distress*.” What makes the Holy Spirit sad or sorrowful? Unwholesome talk (v. 29), bitterness, rage, anger, brawling, slander and malice (v. 31).

What are we to respond with rather than anger? (v. 32)

- K
- C
- F

I realize this is often easier said than done. That’s why I love Craig Groeschel’s suggestion in *Dangerous Prayers* to pray daily to devote each part of our body to God, including our mouth. If guarding your mouth is a struggle for you too, don’t miss these great verses to add to your personalized “send me” prayer: [Psalm 19:14](#), [Psalm 119:171-173](#), [Psalm 141:3](#).

Based on what you know and have learned about the mouth, what specifically do YOU need to devote to God through daily prayer?



I hope walking through Ephesians 4, along with the other truths included in this lesson, has helped bring personal clarity to what YOU specifically need to pray for to daily devote your body to God. We've looked closer at the body as a whole, the mind, heart and mouth. Don't stop here! Now, I encourage you to make it your priority to do two additional things:

1. Do a biblical word search on your eyes, ears, hands and feet. Look each one up in the concordance (found in the back of most Bibles) OR, use the search bar on BibleGateway.com to pull up a list of verses for each body part.
2. Use what you've learned from this lesson, and your word search, to write your own "send me" prayer for each part of your body. If you have the book *Dangerous Prayers*, refer to Craig Groeschel's prayer in Chapter 3.7 as an example.

It's been a joy to study God's Word with you!
Kat