

FLOODED

BIBLE STUDY COMPANION



KNOW THE TRUTH. LIVE THE TRUTH.
IT CHANGES EVERYTHING.



FLOODED

BY NICKI KOZIARZ



Hi OBS friends! My name is Wendy Blight, and I'm the biblical content specialist for Online Bible Studies. We're excited to journey with you over the next five weeks as we take a deeper dive into Scripture. We'll learn *what* to do when we find ourselves desperate and crying, "*Please God, no more hard things,*" and *where* to go when we find ourselves doubting God's faithfulness, love and maybe even His very existence.

Our team has spent the last few months reading, praying, studying and writing on these very topics with *you* in our hearts. Asking the Lord for scriptures and teachings to minister to, equip and encourage the women He brings to this study. *You* are one of those women. Sweet friend, we invite you to begin confidently, trusting the Lord has gone before you and now He's waiting to meet you ... in the pages of His Word and these lessons.

I can't think of a better way to open our study time than to pray for us as we begin.

Let us pray ...

Oh, God, we're excited for a new journey through Your Word with You. We know it's a living and active Word, and You speak in a fresh way every time we open it. Give us ears to hear and hearts to understand all You have for us over these next five weeks. Go before us. Order our days. Give us the discipline and desire to make this study a priority — to persevere when we want to give up. Reveal marvelous new truths and promises from Your Word. Draw us close. Speak into our doubts and fears. Our disbelief and unbelief. Do a mighty healing, transforming work. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

With love and prayers,
Wendy



Lesson 1

Bible Study Companion Leader: Wendy Blight



Hi! Welcome to Lesson 1 of our *Flooded* Bible Study Companion (BSC). My name is Wendy Blight. I serve as the biblical content specialist for our Online Bible Studies team, but today I'm excited to join you as our teacher as we go back thousands of years to study one of the oldest accounts in the Bible: the story of Noah. And, actually, we'll go back even further than Noah to set up our teaching topic for today: passing on the baton of faith.

What I treasure about our lesson is that through Noah's story, we'll see how Scripture's thousand-year-old stories still speak to us today. And how can that be, you might ask? That can be because of this verse from the book of Hebrews.

Hebrews 4:12 says,

“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart” (NIV).

This verse ensures we understand and trust that God's living, breathing words still speak to us today! This Scripture will come to life as we learn how Noah stood steadfast in his faith in the midst of a wicked and rebellious generation.

To gain a more complete picture of Noah's faith, rather than start with the story of Noah in Genesis Chapter 6, we'll travel back and spend time in Genesis 4-5. Why? Because it's there we find the genealogy of Noah. Don't let that word chase you away. All it really means is that we'll spend time studying Noah's family line.



In the Beginning

Open your Bible to [Genesis 5](#) and read the entire chapter. As you read it, note any repeated words or phrases that stand out to you and write them below.

In this genealogy, beginning with Adam, we find 10 generations from Adam to Noah. Each one represented by one name.

Write the names that begin each generation below (see v. 1, 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 25, 28).

Keep these generations, words and phrases you noted — and the names you wrote down — at the top of your mind as we move through the lesson.

Digging Deeper Into the Generations

Adam and His Sons

Genesis 5 begins with Adam, the first man. ([Genesis 1:27](#), [Genesis 2:7](#) — a more detailed account) And to come alongside man, God created Eve, the first woman. ([Genesis 1:27](#), [Genesis 2:21-22](#)) They lived in pure perfection with God in His glorious garden of Eden. In that garden, Adam and Eve walked and talked with God. His very presence was with them. God generously and graciously provided for their every need until that fateful day the serpent came for a visit. ([Genesis 3](#))



On that day, everything changed. Sin entered the world and the hearts of God's people because of the choices made by Adam and Eve. ([Genesis 3:6](#)) Though the Lord came down and restored His relationship with Adam and Eve by sacrificing an animal and taking its skin to cover their shame, ([Genesis 3:21](#)) they still experienced consequences for their sin. God forever banished them from their garden home and from that day forward they had to work for everything they had. ([Genesis 3:22-24](#))

Read [Romans 5:12](#). How does this New Testament verse confirm what we read in Genesis 3?

Eve gave birth to two sons, Cain and Abel. ([Genesis 4:1-2](#)) The author tells us the Lord looked with favor upon Abel. ([Genesis 4:4](#)) But He did not look with favor upon Cain. ([Genesis 4:5](#)) We aren't given the exact reason for this, but we can glean it might be related to either the offering each one brought or the heart with which the offering was brought.

Let's take a little detour from our genealogy to learn a bit more about the relationship between Cain and Abel.

Read [Genesis 4:2-9](#).

Because God looked upon Abel with more favor, Cain grew jealous of Abel, so much so that he attacked and killed him. When God confronted Cain with his murderous act, Cain showed absolutely no remorse. Instead, he responded to God with indifference and defiance. Consequently, God placed a curse upon Cain.



Now read [Genesis 4:10-16](#) to learn more about this curse. What was Cain's punishment? How did Cain respond? How did God respond to Cain's response?

Even after God confronted him, Cain felt only self-pity and concern for himself. He still expressed no sorrow or regret for killing his only brother.

Cain eventually settled in a city called Nod. He purposed in his heart to build a city, and he did. Sadly, this city, and eventually the civilization that grew up around it, reflected the heart of its founder — a man who not only showed indifference to God, but also defied and refused to bow down to God.

Though an impressive, sophisticated and progressive city, the people that indwelt Nod were wicked and rebellious to the point of provoking God's judgment and wrath.

This was Cain's legacy ... indifference to God, wickedness and rebellion.

Now let's return to Adam's genealogy, (Genesis 5) this time focusing on the name that follows Adam's name. Notice it wasn't Abel (because his brother took his life) and it wasn't Cain (because God sent him away). Instead we see a new name. Seth.

Seth

Since Adam and Eve had lost both their sons, God blessed them with another son to carry on their family line. I see this as beautiful evidence of God's grace. God did not hold their garden sin against them. He continued to bless them.

Eve named this son Seth and spoke these words upon naming him: *"God has granted another child in place of Abel, since Cain killed him"* (Genesis 4:25; [Genesis 5:3](#), NIV).

From Eve's words, we can see Adam and Eve still called upon the name of the Lord and looked to Him for provision.



Seth fathered Enosh. ([Genesis 4:26](#))

Enosh

Just after we're told of Enosh's birth, we read these words: *"At that time people began to call on the name of the Lord"* (Genesis 4:26b NIV).

As we study Adam's genealogy, we'll begin to see something different than we saw in Cain's life and line. Instead of reflecting the ways of Cain, the men in Adam's genealogy seemed to have a different heart. Instead of indifference toward God, they have a heart for God that grew stronger in each generation..

What led those in Seth's line to be different? Had they heard about the sins of Cain? His pride. His self-reliance. The crimes he committed. The pain he caused. The wicked city he had created. We cannot know for certain. But I'm thinking they did.

And I can't help but glean from the few passages we've read in Chapters 4 and 5 that Adam and Eve walked with God. They raised their children to know, love and worship God. We know Abel followed their example by the words God spoke about his offering. I'm thinking Seth then followed that example as he raised his children. Enosh then followed that example as he raised his.

Kenan, Mahalalel and Jared

Enosh fathered Kenan. Kenan fathered Mahalalel. Mahalalel fathered Jared.

Jared fathered Enoch.

Enoch

I asked you earlier to read through the genealogy and jot down words or phrases that caught your attention. Let's go back to that question, and I'll highlight through bolding what I found noteworthy.



In verse 5:5, “*Altogether, Adam lived 930 years, **and then he died.***”

In verse 5:8, “*Altogether, Seth lived a total of 912 years, **and then he died.***”

In verse 5:11, “*Altogether, Enosh lived 905 years, **and then he died.***”

In verse 5:14, “*Altogether, Kenan lived a total of 910 years, **and then he died.***”

In verse 5:17, “*Altogether, Mahalalel lived a total of 895 years, **and then he died.***”

In verse 5:20, “*Altogether, Jared lived a total of 962 years, **and then he died.***”

Now let’s read what the author tells us about Enoch in verses 23-24.

“*Altogether, Enoch lived 365 years. **Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away.***”

What? Definitely not the same wording. Even some strange sounding words.

What in the world do these differences mean?

First, we see the phrase “*walked faithfully with God*” instead of “*lived.*” We have not seen those words before. That change is significant because it points out a distinction between *walking* with God throughout your life and simply *living* your life. We’ll talk more about what these words mean when we get to Noah, so keep them tucked in your heart.

Read [Hebrews 11:5](#). Hebrews Chapter 11 is often called the “Hall of Faith” because it lists many of the biblical heroes of the faith and shows what living one’s faith looks like and what it produces.



What does this verse tell us about Enoch?

Second, the fact that Enoch “*was no more, because God took him away*” replaces the language “*and then he died.*” We find no language about Enoch dying because he didn’t. He miraculously entered into God’s presence without experiencing death!

In [2 Kings 2](#), We find another story where God took one of His prophets immediately into heaven without experiencing death. If you’re curious about who it is, take a few minutes to read this story and answer this question. Who else does the Lord take up to heaven?

Adam’s genealogy continues to reveal how each generation’s faith increased and grew in ways that impacted the next.

The men of God who led these generations passed on what I’ll call “the baton of faith.”

Just as in track and field relay races, the runners run and pass batons, one to another, each leg of the race, we as believers are also running a race. What’s similar in our two races is that we run as teammates and we run with a baton. The one important difference is the baton we carry. Ours is not a hollow round cylinder with no intrinsic value; ours is a deep and abiding faith grounded in God’s living and active Word. Ours is the baton of faith we carry in our hearts that God calls us to pass on to the next generation.



As you look back on your growing up years, was there someone in your life (a parent, neighbor, friend, youth leader, teacher) who passed on their baton of faith? Someone who taught you about faith in God and what it looked like to live out that faith? Who was that person? Write their name and a prayer of praise thanking God for that person below.

Is this someone you can reach out to and thank (may even pray with or write a prayer for) via a call, text, email or letter? If so, I encourage you to invest a few minutes this week, maybe even right now, to share your gratitude.

Okay, are you ready to finish up our genealogy?

Enoch fathered Methuselah.

Methuselah

In verse 27, we read, *“Altogether, Methuselah **lived a total of 969 years, and then he died**”* (emphasis added).

When we get to Lamech’s name, we find another important difference.

Lamech

For the generations of Seth, Enosh, Kenan, Hamalalel, Jared, Enoch and Methuselah, the opening words of each verse reads:

“When [insert name of father] had lived [insert number of years], he became the father of [insert name of son].”



But with Lamech, we find additional, much more descriptive wording:

*“When Lamech had lived 182 years, **he had a son. He named him Noah and said, ‘He will comfort us in the labor and painful toil of our hands caused by the ground the Lord has cursed.’** After Noah was born, Lamech lived 595 years and had other sons and daughters. Altogether, Lamech lived a total of 777 years, and then he died”* (Genesis 5:28-31, NIV).

These verses provide evidence Methusalelah had received and firmly held onto his baton of faith and passed it onto Lamech.

With these words, Lamech made a declaration about Noah’s role in the Kingdom of God. That Noah would comfort God’s people in the midst of the curse that God had placed upon the earth in Genesis 3.

Noah would stand out among his generation, standing upon the spiritual heritage that began with the declaration Eve spoke over Seth generations before. I see Seth as the gateway to the faith-filled legacy upon which Noah would stand. The legacy from which he would draw his strength, perseverance and courage.

The very words God used to describe Noah in Genesis 6:9 confirm the passing on of the baton of faith:

“Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked faithfully with God” (NIV).

What familiar wording do you see at the end of this verse? Wording that takes us back to Enoch ([Genesis 5:23-24](#))? Write them below.

Noah

Studying the generations that came before Noah, we glean two things.

First, God birthed Noah into a wicked and evil civilization, with Cain at its root, that had provoked God’s wrath and judgment. God’s very words in Genesis 6:3-5 reveal this fact.



“Then the Lord said, ‘My Spirit will not contend with humans forever, for they are mortal’ ... The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time” (NIV).

Second, God was sorry ... grieved ... in His heart that He had made man.

“So the Lord was sorry he had ever made them and put them on the earth. It broke his heart. And the Lord said, ‘I will wipe this human race I have created from the face of the earth. Yes, and I will destroy every living thing—all the people, the large animals, the small animals that scurry along the ground, and even the birds of the sky. I am sorry I ever made them”
(Genesis 6:6-7, NLT).

The Hebrew word for “sorry” is *nacham*. It means “to be sorry, to console oneself.” It’s a word that implies a love relationship between the parties involved. Though God knew this would happen, it still grieved His heart because He loved His created ones. They were the crowning glory of His Creation, created by Him to be known by Him. Yet, so many had ignored, rejected and rebelled against Him.

God made clear through these words that there was nothing ... not one thing ... that had not been corrupted by the fall in the garden. The New Testament too speaks of this corruption.

Read [Romans 6:23](#) and [Jeremiah 17:9](#). What do these verses say about sin and how it affects our hearts?

The sin that entered the garden and invaded every generation of humans since is the same sin that led to the indifference and defiance we heard in Cain’s words to God. And that indifference led to the rebellion, greed and corruption that became Cain’s legacy. To read more about his genealogy, read [Genesis 4:15-24](#).



What's so interesting is that Jesus addressed the days of Noah in the New Testament.

Read [Matthew 24:37-39](#).

In this passage, Jesus tells us that those in Noah's day, those whom Noah had warned to repent or judgement would come, ignored the warnings and continued to live their lives — business as usual. They had no fear, no conviction, no regret for how they were living. The end for them came suddenly and expectantly.

What evidence do we see of people living this way in our world today?

It sounds hopeless, right?

But Noah!

Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord

"But Noah found favor in the Lord" (Genesis 6:8, NIV).

Oh, how I love when we see this word "but" in God's Word. Noah found favor in the eyes of God.

Read [Romans 5:20](#). Write it below. How does this verse come into play in our story of Noah?



God had resolved in His heart to completely cleanse the earth from the influence of Cain's polluted, vile and wicked civilization. Yet, God, who sees everything, who always has His eyes upon His earth and His people, had His eye on Noah. The one man who never succumbed to the sin and corruption that had erupted all around him. God chose Noah to be the one living human with whom He would partner to make a new beginning for His creation and His people.

All glory and praise be to God!

Through Noah and his family, God would preserve a remnant of people to begin a new civilization!

We are part of that remnant, sweet friend. We carry Noah's baton of faith!

Noah Walked With God

God described Noah as one who "walked" with Him. What does that mean? Noah *walked* with God. What made Noah's life different is that He didn't just "live" it, He walked it out with God.

Think about when you walk with a friend. What does it look like? When I walk with my friend, Lisa, we use that time to really talk. We share what's on our hearts, and she truly listens. She asks questions. Invites deeper conversation. We share what burdens our hearts and what brings us great joy. It's the most precious one-on-one time because there are no interruptions ... no family, no cell phones ... no distractions, period. It's the very best quality time.

This passage invites me to ask, what does my walk with God look like? When I walk with Him, does it feel like I'm walking with a friend? Or does it feel like I'm walking with a judge who's waiting to bring the gavel down? Or does it feel like I'm walking with someone who has much more important things to worry about than my little problems, so I remain quiet? For much of my childhood, walking with God didn't even seem like a thing. God was in heaven, far away from me. Almost like a judge who didn't have time for me unless I messed up and then He would notice me.



I'm so thankful that through the years, as I've studied God's Word on my own and in Bible study, my impression of God has changed dramatically. I came to know the God of the Bible from the very One who wrote it!

I think we all want more than the "Wendy lived and Wendy died" epitaph on our headstone. We want the words God will use to describe us to reflect that we too had a deep and abiding relationship with Him.

We want an intimate walk with Him that changes the way we live and love on this earth, that changes our little corner of the world, or maybe even a little corner on the other side of the world.

But, living a righteous, blameless walk with God life can be hard. Even lonely. Lonely because sometimes it means we stand alone in our convictions. We speak the truth when no one wants to hear it. We turn down the invitation to the party because we know what will go on there. We're left out of the conversation about the latest Netflix binge because its subject matter makes us uncomfortable.

Noah took a lonely stand against the evil and wickedness of his day. But, his life emphasizes the power of what it looks like to be the ONE man or woman who stands firm for God in the midst of a godless world.

Take a few minutes to think about this question: What do I hear God asking me to do to walk more closely with Him? To secure my baton of faith and increase the ways in which I can pass on my faith?

Before you answer, I've given a few prompts to help you think through the question.

Do I need to ask God to change and purify my heart — remove anger, bitterness, fear, anxiety — so I can be a beautiful, useful vessel for Him?

Do I need to ignite my prayer life — trust God will work a miracle in a relationship, bring healing to my body, break chains of bitterness and unforgiveness — and then boldly step out in faith and pray for what I've asked?

Do I need to commit to more time in God's Word — read it more, understand it better, memorize it faithfully?

Do I need to tame my tongue — speak kinder to my husband, friend, or family member, encourage my children more, stop gossiping with friends?



Do I need to step out and serve — move outside my comfort zone, share my testimony, lead a group, teach a Sunday school class, mentor another?

Do I need to step up and take a stand on an issue or a truth to change my little corner of the world like Noah did?

Take some time with the lesson, the prompts and God’s Word. Don’t be afraid to sit quietly with God and just listen. Invite Him to work in your heart as you ponder what you’ve learned. Write what you hear and commit to take one step toward putting it into practice.

Closing Thoughts

We have a choice. We can be content to “live” out our years until we die, or we can choose to “walk with God,” listening and watching for His handiwork and then joining Him in it.

I say let’s make an intentional choice right now to continue to walk with God. Let’s pray for opportunities to both gird up our faith and pass on our baton of faith. And where God opens a door, invite Him in. Invite Him to do a new thing and watch the floodgates of heaven pour forth into our lives and the lives of others, as they did for Noah.

Thank you for spending time with me in God’s Word. How I wish we could sit together over a cup of coffee or hot chocolate (since I don’t drink coffee) and share what God has done in our hearts as we’ve met Him in His Word.

Know that I’m praying for you as you begin your journey through *Flooded*. For God to meet you in the pages of His Word ... to minister to your heart ... to speak to your spirit ... and touch your life in intimate ways that you will know that you know you’ve been in His presence and He is at work in you.

Holding you close in my heart,

Wendy



Lesson 2

Bible Study Companion Leader: Katrina V. Wylie



Hello, fellow wrestler of doubt! I'm glad you decided to dig deeper into the doubts that often flood when it comes to **listening to God**. This doubt stuff is hard. But as we learn to identify the obstacles that keep us from hearing and listening to God, and we learn to recognize how God speaks, let's hold onto these words from Nicki Koziarz:

"With God, the reality of hard always holds the perspective of hope"
(p.83).

Let's dig in with God to swap our doubt with hope.

Hearing vs. Listening

"If you don't have my eyes, you don't truly have my ears." This is a phrase I've coined in our home. Just ask my kids and they'll confirm it with an eye roll (gotta love the tween years). What does it mean when they hear these words? My kids know that if I'm not looking at them, though I may *hear* them speaking (and may even respond with a nod or "Uh-huh"), I'm likely not truly *listening*. In other words, there's a difference between hearing and listening.

Let's check out the difference. I've defined them below. Think about each word in relation to communicating with God. Mark (underline, highlight or circle) the words that help you clearly grasp the difference.

- *HEAR: perceive with the ear the sound made by (someone or something).*
- *LISTEN: give one's attention to a sound; take notice of and act on what someone says; make an effort to hear something; be alert and ready to hear something; to pay attention to what one is going to say.*

My pastor recently addressed the difference as well (love when God works like that). Again, mark the words that speak to you most in each description:

- *Hearing: accidental, involuntary, effortless*
- *Listening: focused, voluntary, intentional*



These definitions cause me to question: *Do I hear (perceive) God's voice effortlessly? Do I intentionally focus on listening to Him (pay attention and act)?* Perhaps you, too?

The distractions of this world make it difficult to hear God's voice, let alone intentionally focus on what He's speaking. And as if battling to hear and listen isn't enough, in charges a battalion of doubt! *Was it really God I heard? Did I hear Him correctly?*

Which of these is more likely to flood your heart and mind with doubt and why?

- *Hearing: was it really God I heard?*
- *Listening: did I hear him correctly?*

Friend, whether it's one or both, know you're not alone. As we press on together to overcome the obstacles of listening to God, let's hold onto this hope:

"A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken" Ecclesiastes 4:12 (NLT).

There's power in "together." There's power when God's girls stand back-to-back to combat doubt. There's power when we invite God into the process. Let's pause to invite Him now.

Lord, we can't combat this doubt stuff on our own. In our own strength, our doubts grow. But in Your strength, our doubts are destroyed! Be with us while we work through this lesson, and when we face the doubts in our day-to-day lives as we learn to listen to You. We invite You into this process to form a triple-braided cord with us. In Jesus' name, amen.

Obstacles to Hearing and Listening to God

As I type this, I hear a constant thud, thud, thud right outside my window. Apparently our next-door neighbors are working on an outdoor project. A few days ago, I had a similar experience. That day, it was the noise of a concrete truck pouring a new driveway at another neighbor's house. Imagine trying to focus with the sound of a rocky mixture tumbling around a metal cylinder and pouring down a metal chute, all while shovels scrape across the mixture to spread it all around. Oh, and the time before that? I heard jackhammers when those same neighbors removed their old driveway!



Did I mention I'm incredibly sound-sensitive? Ugh. I need to get a pair of those sound-canceling headphones Nicki talks about in her book! (p.73)

As I ponder these distractions (and so many more), I can't help but notice the irony. Throughout our lives, we find ourselves up against similar situations when we seek to hear and listen to God.

Below you'll find some general obstacles to hearing and listening to God. Mark the ones you battle and add any others that come to mind.

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Busyness/my to-do list | <input type="checkbox"/> Stubbornness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cluttered mind and/or surroundings | <input type="checkbox"/> Pride |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of alone time | <input type="checkbox"/> Fear |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No available quiet space | <input type="checkbox"/> Doubt/lack of confidence/faith |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inconsistent or non-existent Bible or prayer time | <input type="checkbox"/> Emotions |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wanting my own way/control | <input type="checkbox"/> Worldly idols |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Impatience (not wanting to wait) | <input type="checkbox"/> The enemy's lies |

Read back through the list. Pay attention to how some obstacles are *external* (come through the things of *the world*), while others are *internal* (come from *within us*). Which type do you tend to struggle with more? Why do you think that is?

Rooting out why we struggle to hear and listen to God is a great help in overcoming obstacles. Something else that helps me identify my obstacles is Psalm 46:10 (NIV):

"He says, 'Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.'"

I've always loved the first part of this verse. It's short, simple and easy to remember. But for the longest time, I interpreted it incorrectly. I only considered the meaning of the words "be still" in English, rather than in the original Hebrew. Because of that, I read it as an instruction to quiet our mind and body. To aim to be silent so we can better know and listen to God. However, that's not what "be still" means in Psalm 46:10.



In the original Hebrew, “be still” is *raphah*, which has the basic meaning “to sink, slacken, drop.” The form used in Psalm 46:10 means “to let drop (the hands), cease, abandon, forsake.” Interestingly, *raphah* is used 46 times in the Hebrew Bible (46 times, 46 Psalm ... sorry, the geek in me had to point that out). Some other occurrences of *raphah* are translated “enough!” ([1 Samuel 15:16](#)) and “withdraw your hand” ([1 Chronicles 21:15](#)).

Knowing this, now when I read Psalm 46:10, I see, “*Cease! Withdraw your hand and know that I am God.*” Not only does this provide a clearer context for what’s really going on in [Psalm 46](#), it also addresses obstacles I encounter in listening to God. I don’t let things “drop,” I hold onto things. Rather than cease, I strive. Instead of withdrawing my hand, I try to play God!

Re-read [Psalm 46:10](#). Who does God say will be exalted?

Friend, you and I are not the “I” referred to in this verse. We’re not supposed to take God’s role in our hands. I don’t know about you, but I need this reminder. *Thank you, Lord, for this reminder. May it come to mind every time You speak. May we cease striving, remove our hand and, instead, listen to and exalt You.*

What insight does studying the true meaning of [Psalm 46:10](#) give you as you seek to listen to God?

When we know and remember *who* is God, we’re less likely to bump up against those obstacles we talked about above when listening to God.

It’s also important to know who God *is*. Yes, there is a difference. Who God is speaks to His character and *how* He speaks. When we know who God *is*, we can better know His voice, trust Him and decide to listen to Him.

On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being really well, how well would you say you know God? Do the same with trust. How would you rate how much you trust Him?

- Know God =
- Trust God =



While we won't study knowing and trusting God today, examining how we answer these questions is important because they play an important role in our ability to hear God, and our decision to listen to Him. Not knowing or trusting God are big obstacles!

- How well we *know* God determines how well we can *hear* (perceive) His voice.
- How much we *trust* God determines how willing we are to *listen* to Him (pay attention and act).

Read [John 10:3-4](#).

When I'm in a crowd and my husband or kids call my name, even if I can't see them, I still know it's them. I've spent enough time with them to recognize their voices. I also don't hesitate to respond because I trust them. This is how well Scripture tells us we (the sheep) should know and trust Jesus (our Shepherd). So well that, even amidst the chaos and noise of the world and our thoughts, we'll recognize His voice and respond.

Below you'll find activities that help us better know God and His voice, and/or increase our trust in Him. On a scale of 1-10, how consistently do you do these?

- Read the Bible =
- Study the Bible =
- Read/listen to biblically based content (books, devos, podcasts, etc.) =
- Pray (including listening) =
- Attend church =
- Spend time with other believers =
- Worship =
- Journal =
- Spend time in nature =
- Take small steps in faith to follow God =

Rating your consistency is not meant to bring shame if you score low in some areas. We all have areas we can improve upon. Plus, remember, shame is not from God. ([Romans 8:1](#))

Instead, our goal is to identify areas we can grow and improve, SO THAT we can better know His voice and listen when He speaks.



Choose one of your lower rated activities to work on. Write a prayer of commitment. Ask God to make Himself and His voice more clearly known, and to build your trust to listen.

How God Speaks

God has demonstrated His desire to communicate with His people throughout history. We see evidence of this in every book of the Bible. He:

- Conversed with Adam and Eve in the garden ([Genesis 2:15-23, 3:8-22](#))
- Warned Noah of the flood and instructed him to build an ark ([Genesis 6:13-7:4](#))
- Called Abraham up and out of Ur to be the father of a great nation ([Genesis 17:1-8](#))

In these stories and many more, God *reaches out* to His people. But does God still speak to us today? *Do you doubt God desires to speak to you?* I'll be honest, sometimes I do. This is why I'm grateful we have God's Word to flood our hearts with Truth rather than doubt!

Read [John 1:1, 14, 18](#). Who was the Word and what did it become? Who did He dwell among?

From the very beginning, God planned for the Word (Jesus) to become flesh (human) and live among His people. Don't miss the importance of this. Jesus Himself is the ultimate expression and proof of God's desire to communicate with us!

God sending Jesus into the world also opened up three important pathways (and two ways) for God to speak to us:

1. Jesus was made relatable!
Jesus walked this earth fully human and experienced life as we do. Because of this, **God can and does teach and speak to us through the life of Jesus.**
2. God was made accessible!
Jesus died on the cross as the ultimate sacrifice for our sins. His death washed us clean and enables us to now approach God's throne of grace with confidence.
3. The Holy Spirit was made available!
Jesus promised to send a helper in His place. Because of this, when we become believers, **God indwells us and speaks to us through His Spirit in us!**



Read the passages below. Write next to each which of the three “pathways” they confirm: Jesus relatable, God accessible, or Holy Spirit available. I did the first one as an example.

[Hebrews 2:14-18](#) - Jesus relatable

[John 14:16-17, 26](#) -

[Ephesians 2:18](#) -

[John 14:6](#) -

[Ephesians 1:13-14](#) -

[John 11:35](#) -

Before we move on, let me share one more thing God revealed that the Bible geek in me can't help but share.

Re-read [John 1:14](#).

The word “dwelt” in the original Greek is *skenoō* which means “to dwell as in a tent, encamp, have my tabernacle.” John used this description knowing the people would be familiar with it and better able to grasp what He meant.

Are you familiar with the story in Exodus where God instructed Moses to build a tabernacle? If not, read about it in [Exodus 26](#). Basically, the tabernacle was a portable and ornate tent. It's where God's people gathered to worship and offer sacrifices to God the many years they wandered in the wilderness. God's presence literally lived in a special room in the tabernacle called the Holy of Holies. Like tents today, it was a temporary dwelling later replaced by a permanent structure — the temple Solomon built.

Unfortunately, Solomon's temple was destroyed and then later rebuilt several more times throughout history. But, the good news is, the destruction of God's temples didn't stop God from dwelling with His people. Why? Because God sent His only Son, Jesus, in the flesh to dwell among them. And, when Jesus died on the cross, it STILL doesn't stop God from dwelling with His people ... even today! Wait till you hear how.

John used the word “dwelt” in verse 14 for another reason. It was intentional to ensure God's people knew Jesus, in the flesh, was a tabernacle. His body, like the tent in the wilderness, served only as a temporary dwelling place. After His death and resurrection, Jesus went back up to heaven to sit at the right hand of His Father.

But God! He had a plan for new “temples” to be “built,” so He could dwell amongst us while we await His final return!



[Read 1 Corinthians 3:16](#). What does Paul, the author of 1 Corinthians, say we are? What does that allow God to do today?

Don't miss this. WE are now the temple God dwells in! His Spirit indwells *us* as believers. Always present. Always accessible. Always speaking.

Take a moment to praise God for this beautiful gift!

So far, we've looked at two ways God speaks:

- **God speaks through the life of Jesus.**
- **God speaks through the Holy Spirit in us.**

Let's look briefly at a few more ways God speaks.

Read [Psalm 19:1-4](#) and fill in the blank:

- **God speaks through His _____**

We have a big, beautiful maple tree in the center of our front yard that I absolutely love. What I don't love are the five tall, messy pine trees that surround it. When my daughter was six, she sat quietly in the grass one day, gazing up at those trees as I cleaned the flower bed beneath. Suddenly she says, *"Mama, the maple tree is Jesus, and we are the trees gathered around Him. He came right up in the middle of us and shelters us, just like it's branches shelter us now."* I asked if her daddy told her that, and she told me it just came into her head as she sat there.

Wow, right? It was such a special mama moment to hear how our God spoke so personally to my little girl. *His* little girl. I, of course, took the opportunity to sit with her beneath the shade of our "Jesus tree" and chat about how our Heavenly Father speaks to us through His creation. Today, almost six years later, she still loves to spend time in nature listening to her Father. It's not uncommon to see her sit quietly outside, journal and pen in hand, listening for God, and then later excitedly share with me what God spoke.

If you're a mom, or a woman who spends time with and around children, what a privilege it is to help raise up the next generation of Christ-followers. To help them know and believe they can hear and listen to God.



This brings to mind the story of Samuel and another way God speaks. Read [1 Samuel 3:1-10](#).

- **God speaks audibly.**

Though we don't know for certain God spoke in an audible voice here, rather than an "inner voice," some scholars believe it was an audible voice since Samuel answered out loud, "*Here I am.*" While it's not common to hear God audibly speak, there's something else we can learn from this passage.

How did Samuel learn it was God calling his name?

Just like God used me to help my daughter, Eli helped Samuel. God often sends mentors to help His children recognize His voice, discern what He speaks, and encourage and hold us accountable to listen. I wonder, if Eli hadn't mentored Samuel, would Samuel have later heard God's voice to know to anoint David as King?

Who has been that helper or mentor for you? Who can you be that helper for? If no one comes to mind, write a prayer and ask God to send you a mentor and/or mentee.

God doesn't just use others to be mentors. Read [1 Samuel 16:1-13](#).

- **God speaks through others.**

We see God speak directly *through* others throughout the Bible. In this example, God used His prophet Samuel to tell Jesse his son David would be the next king of Israel. Also in the Old Testament, God spoke through Moses many times during the Israelites' journey in the wilderness. In the New Testament, God spoke through the disciples to instruct and encourage the Church and gentiles. And He speaks to us through others (and to others through us) still today!



Here are three more ways God speaks:

- **God speaks through dreams.** ([Genesis 37:5-11](#))
- **God speaks through supernatural means.** ([Exodus 3](#))
- **God speaks through visions.** ([Isaiah 6](#))

These ways require watching and waiting for God to come *to us*. However, there are also ways God speaks that we can be proactive and choose to go *to Him* to listen regularly.

Read [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#), [Hebrews 4:12](#), [2 Peter 1:20-21](#), [1 Thessalonians 2:13](#) and fill in the blank.

- **God speaks through** _____

How do [Hebrews 4:12](#) and [1 Thessalonians 2:13](#) refer to the Bible?

The Bible is also called the Word of God because it's *God-breathed*. It's authored by Him. It's *God Himself* speaking to *us*. When I refer to the Bible, I almost always call it "God's Word." Why? I guess because I learned at a young age to associate the word "Bible" with "religious," which seems cold and stuffy to me. But the Word of God? *That's personal*. It's His *personal* invitation for daily, one-on-one conversations with Him. And it's not the only invitation.

Read [1 Thessalonians 5:17-18](#), [Hebrews 4:16](#), [Jeremiah 33:3](#) and [James 1:5](#).

Scripture is clear. Over and over we see God's invitation to approach His throne in prayer. It's His will. It's part of why He sent Jesus to die on the cross for us. But there's more to prayer than thanking Him and asking for His help.

Re-read [Jeremiah 33:3](#). What does it say God will do in return?



God answers when we call. He teaches and gives us guidance, which lets us know:

- **God speaks through prayer.**

Have you ever had someone come and ask for help, but then just walk away before you respond? That'd be pretty weird, right? But don't we do the very same to God sometimes? Pour out our hearts and then just end our prayer time? For a long time, I looked at prayer as a monologue. Honestly, sometimes I still do. But Jeremiah 33:3 reminds us prayer is a dialogue. We need to pause and *listen* for His answer. We need to *pay attention and act!*

Taking Action

My daughter ran excitedly into my room as I worked on this teaching: *"Mom, God spoke to me in a new way! You know how you always say not to just go through the motions of my quiet time, but to really connect with God? And then last night how you explained what conviction means? Well I heard you, but I wasn't really listening. Then this morning when I was praying, I suddenly realized I've only been going through the motions, and I felt like I needed to change that. So I asked God to help me know how to connect with Him. And guess what? I got out my devotion and He answered me right there, right in my devotion!"*

She then went on to share all the specific ways she learned to personally connect with God. I shared in her excitement, told her how proud I was of her for recognizing the conviction of the Holy Spirit and God speaking, and then asked, *"So how can you take action on what God spoke to you?"* With my help, she decided to list the ways she learned to connect with God on two 3x5 cards. She placed one on her nightstand so it'll be the first thing she's reminded of when she wakes up and before she goes to bed. She placed the other on her mat at our table so she'll also be reminded throughout her day each time she eats.

Now it's time for us to take action too! Did you notice that the last two ways God speaks (through His Word and prayer) were also on the list of things (from page 5) we can do to know and trust God more? On the next page, you'll find steps to use/do during your time in God's Word and in prayer to help you practice hearing and listening to God. I purposely put them on a separate page so you can refer back to and use it anytime. I invite you to try it out during your next Bible/prayer time.



When you find yourself flooded with doubt about hearing and listening to God, remember how the life of Jesus and God's Word reveal a God who reaches out. Remember and re-read how He's spoken to others in the Bible. Remember the specific ways He's spoken to you and that He is *in* you always. Remembering these things brings hope to our hard, doubt-filled days. And having hope makes it easier to decide to listen and step out in faith with God.

It's been an honor standing back-to-back with you to combat doubt,
Kat



Developing our “spiritual ears” to hear and listen to God is like any new skill — it takes time and practice. It begins with a daily choice to seek God and then listen. This page will help you do that while you spend time in God’s Word and in prayer.

Hearing and Listening to God Through His Word

- Before you begin reading, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to open your ears and mind to perceive God’s voice and will. Then believe He will!
- The purpose of reading the Bible isn’t only to acquire knowledge about God; it’s to experience Him! Picture Him talking to you and approach it like a conversation.
- As you read, the Holy Spirit will draw your attention to words, phrases or concepts. That’s God speaking! Pause to reflect on them and journal what comes to mind.
- Let certain words or passages inspire you to pray His Word. When the Spirit brings situations, sins, people, truths and praises to mind, pause and respond in prayer.
- When you question the meaning of a passage or how it applies to you, stop and ask God for understanding. Then read it again while listening.
- When you struggle with doubt that you’re hearing God or understanding correctly, take your doubt straight to Him! He can handle your uncertainty and honesty.

Hearing and Listening to God Through Prayer

Though there’s no right or wrong way to pray, I like to use this acrostic I learned in a study called “Rooted” because it includes the important element of listening:

- **Praise** - Beginning prayer with praise puts us in a humble posture towards God, brings Him glory, and helps us personally connect with Him. We naturally draw closer to those whom we feel gratitude for and towards.
- **Repent** - When someone sins against us, it drives a wedge in our relationship. The same is true when we sin against God. Like Adam and Eve, we tend to withdraw/hide. Repentance brings us back into right relationship with God so we can better connect.
- **Ask** - We’re pretty good at asking God *for* things (and we should do so), but do you ever ask God *about* things? *What do you want to show me about this? How can I look at it from Your perspective? Why does it bother me? What is it really about?*
- **Yield** - Now’s the time to remember and apply [Psalm 62:5](#)! As you listen, jot down any verses, songs, words, phrases, themes, people, impressions and images God gives. Ask further questions. Then respond with obedience to His instructions.



Lesson 3

Bible Study Companion Leader: Stacy J. Lowe



Hi there, and welcome to Lesson 3 of our Bible Study Companion! I'm so excited to be here with you today!

Some time ago, I found myself in an airport, frustrated by a weather delay that would undoubtedly cause me to miss my connecting flight home. The minutes ticked by as I anxiously refreshed the airline's website over and over again, praying that somehow my next flight would be pushed back as well. I finally boarded the plane an hour and a half later. After a short flight and a mad dash across the next airport, I made it to my final (now also delayed) flight with two minutes to spare.

"God is good!" I thought to myself. *"Thank You, God!"*

This is where I (figuratively) stopped in my tracks.

Yes, God was good for allowing me to catch that flight. But what if I hadn't made it in time? What if I arrived at the gate just as the plane was taking off, and I was stranded in the airport for hours, 1,500 miles from home? Would He still be good?

You see, so often I subconsciously connect God's goodness to things going my way. When they do, I'll shout it from the rooftops. But when life goes topsy turvy, I don't naturally find myself proclaiming His still-present goodness over my situation.

Please don't misunderstand — God is absolutely good and worthy of praise when all seems right in our world. But He's *equally* good and worthy of praise in our "Where are You, God?" moments as well. In this lesson, I want to challenge us to separate God's goodness from our circumstances, learn how to look for it in even the hardest times, and see why we can count on it being there always, no matter what.

No More Hard Things

Nicki Koziarz opens Chapter 8 of *Flooded* with this:

"Please, God, no more hard things" (p. 105).



Oh, how I relate to that feeling! 2020 was a tough year for us all, and while I didn't experience the level of loss some did, I *did* wrestle through feelings of loneliness, frustration, anger and sadness. Living alone, I went for weeks on end without so much as physically touching another human. No hugs, no high fives, *nothing*. This time of wrestling ripped away every ounce of normal from my world, and each time I regained my footing, another wave came along and knocked me off my feet.

How have you experienced loss in this recent season of life?

Like Nicki, the cry of my heart is for "no more hard things." But that's not our reality. Despite the misconception of some that a life following Jesus is a life without hardship, Jesus Himself promised quite the opposite.

What does Jesus say we'll go through in [John 16:33](#)?

In [Matthew 16:24](#), what does He instruct us to do?

To take up our cross and follow Jesus means to model ourselves after Him and the way He faced life — a difficult life at that. In His time on earth, He experienced loneliness, grief, betrayal, and a very human desire to avoid suffering.

Days before His crucifixion, while in Gethsemane with His disciples, Jesus went off by Himself to pray. Scripture tells us He was "*anguished and distressed*" and "*crushed with grief to the point of death*" (Matthew 26:37-38, NLT).



Read [Matthew 26:39-42 \(NLT\)](#) and fill in the missing phrases from Jesus' prayer.

"My Father! If it is possible, _____."

Yet I want _____."

Or in other words,

"No more hard things, God! But if it's what You want, difficult or not, I want it, too."

Jesus acknowledged His struggle, but He didn't give up; He chose to rise above it. He trusted the goodness of God enough to know His suffering served a greater purpose.

In taking up our cross and following Him, we're called to do the same.

The Goodness of God

Read [Psalm 23](#) in its entirety, then copy verse 6 in the space below. (*Bible study tip! When reading a passage you're familiar with, try reading it in a different translation to get a fresh understanding of the words.*)

Now go back and circle or highlight the frequency of God's goodness in our lives.

The NLT words it like this:

"Surely your goodness and unfailing love will pursue me all the days of my life ..."
(Psalm 23:6).

Did you notice David's words? *All* days. Not only the good days, but also the bad days. The days nothing goes our way. The days we find ourselves angry with God and our circumstances. The days we feel anything but holy.



The goodness of God operates independent of our circumstances, because it's the very essence of who He is. He chases after us with His goodness *always*.

Read the verses in the chart below, then complete the sentence starter, "Because of God's goodness..." for each set. I'll fill in the first one to get you started.

Verses	Because of God's Goodness...
Deuteronomy 31:6 , Joshua 1:9 , Isaiah 41:10 , Psalm 23:4 , Psalm 94:14 , Matthew 28:20 , John 14:15-18	...no matter what I'm going through, I am never alone.
Nahum 1:7 , Isaiah 43:2 , Proverbs 18:10 , Psalm 23:4 , Psalm 34:7-8 , 2 Corinthians 4:8-9 , 2 Thessalonians 3:3	
Daniel 9:9 , Psalm 32:1 , Psalm 86:5 , Ephesians 4:32 , Colossians 3:13 , Hebrews 8:12 , 1 John 1:9	
Lamentations 3:22-23 , Psalm 145:9 , Luke 6:36 , Ephesians 2:4-5 , Titus 3:5 , Hebrews 4:16 , 1 Peter 1:3	
Isaiah 54:10 , Psalm 86:5 , Psalm 136:26 , John 3:16 , Romans 8:35-39 , 1 John 3:1 , 1 John 4:7-11	

Here's what I see in these verses:

Because of God's goodness, **we are never alone.**

Because of God's goodness, **we are protected.**

Because of God's goodness, **we are forgiven.**

Because of God's goodness, **we are shown mercy.**

Because of God's goodness, **we are loved.**



What other verses and promises come to mind? Add them here!

Because of God's goodness...

Which of these aspects of God's goodness are you most in need of right now, and why?

Where do you currently see evidence of God's goodness in your life?

Searching for Goodness

Did you struggle with that last question? It's okay if you did. When we're desperate for "no more hard things," it can be tough to see beyond the pain of the moment to the goodness of God surrounding us. It *is* possible, though.

Ever heard of the Baader-Meinhof phenomenon (also called frequency bias)? It describes that experience of taking note of something, then suddenly seeing that same thing all around you. Like when you research a certain kind of car, then see that very car all over the highway. Or you buy new white sneakers, then notice everyone around you seems to wear them as well. It's not that those same cars weren't there before or no one thought to wear white shoes before; it's that your brain has subconsciously been taught to tune in to those things.

Therefore, if we want to see more of God's ever-present goodness in our lives, we have to start looking for it. The more we look, the more we'll see. Think of it like a muscle — when first tested, it's weak and puny, but when exercised, it grows strong and capable.



One way to exercise our faith-muscle is to spend time each day looking past whatever situation we're facing and make a list of the blessings we see around us.

In fact, let's do that right now!

I'll go first.

Right now I'm struggling with yet another month of virtual schooling. My particular job doesn't always lend itself well to the online world, and I've had more times than I care to admit where I finish the day feeling frustrated and defeated. But, here are five blessings I see:

- 1) I have supportive colleagues who understand.
- 2) I still get to see the faces of the students and staff I work with.
- 3) I have a warm, safe place to work.
- 4) I get to put my feet up and relax during lunch every day.
- 5) I have a job that I love.

Now, it's *your* turn! List five blessings you see in your current situation.

1)

2)

3)

4)

5)



If you're having a hard time with this exercise, don't give up! Pray on it, then come back to it later. Finding proof of God's goodness is *always* worth the effort.

Faith Fertilizer

Growing in our understanding of God's goodness isn't just a head thing we take note of; it's also a heart thing that begins to change us from the inside out.

How, you may wonder? In a number of ways! I'll share just a few:

1) We grow in our trust.

Google defines "faith" as "complete trust or confidence in someone or something."

When we don't see or feel God in our struggles, it may cause us to question God's trustworthiness. But, when we stop and take the time to look for Him, we'll see how He's always been right beside us, is still with us, and can be trusted with all our tomorrows.

How has your faith grown through hard times?

2) We learn from our circumstances.

In college, I occasionally suffered from sleep paralysis where I would wake up and be fully aware of my surroundings, yet incapable of moving even a muscle. It was terrifying, and my natural instinct was to fight *against* it. I quickly learned that only made things worse. I had to find ways to calm myself down so I could work *through* it instead.

The same is true in the hard times we face. When we focus more on getting *out* of something rather than getting *through* it, we miss what God wants to teach us. Sometimes, the lesson is deep; other times, it's simply to breathe and know He's with us.



What is a lesson you've learned in hard times?

3) We change our perspective.

I've walked through seasons of life I wouldn't wish on anyone. During those times, when I hyper-focused on what made it difficult and fought against it, it nearly suffocated me. But, when I focused on how God was carrying me through, I found myself grateful. Not necessarily for the experience itself, but for the wisdom that came because of it.

How has focusing on God changed your perspective during a difficult season?

4) We put God on display to the world around us.

There are people around us who desperately need hope. When they see us walk through difficult times, holding onto God and giving Him praise through it, it speaks volumes about the God we serve. I don't mean being a fake Polyanna, but a *real* person with *real* struggles and *real* tears who refuses to give up hope because she knows she belongs to God, and He is still good.

Check out [2 Corinthians 1:4](#). What does this teach you about the struggles you face?



What If Nothing Makes Sense?

This is where it really gets hard. As humans, our understanding is finite. We can't see the universal tapestry God is weaving behind the scenes, and sometimes, no matter how hard we try, none of the pieces seem to fit.

Times like these bring Isaiah 55:8 to mind:

“My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts,” says the LORD. ‘And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine’” (NLT).

Sometimes, no matter how hard we try, we're not going to understand. This is when we really put that faith muscle of ours to the test.

When Jesus walked on earth, His disciples lay witness to miracles and wisdom that could only be attributed to God. One day, while they were trying to get away and rest, a crowd of people recognized Jesus and flocked to be with Him.

Read [Mark 6:30-44](#) to see what happens next.

What problem did the disciples identify, and what solution did they suggest ([vv. 35-36](#))?

What did Jesus tell them to do instead ([v. 37](#))?

Why do you think Jesus assigned them this seemingly impossible task?



Take a look at the rest of the chapter, verses [45-56](#).

The disciples found themselves on the boat in the middle of the lake, struggling against the wind and the waves.

Before we go on with the rest of the teaching, let me share a little bit about this lake.

First, this lake is actually the Sea of Galilee, which is in the lower portion of the Jordan Valley. Especially interesting is how this particular body of water, because of its location, is susceptible to sudden and extreme violent storms, high winds and rough waters caused by the cold air rushing down from the mountains surrounding it and colliding with the warm air over the water. So this was more than just a little wind storm the disciples were facing. They were being tossed about by violent, strong winds threatening to capsize their boat.

Second, though the disciples only had a short distance to travel to meet Jesus, the storm's high winds had driven them nearly four miles off course and into the middle of the lake. Matthew's gospel tells this same story in [Matthew 14:22-33](#) and points out that it was the fourth watch of the night (3:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m. ... Romans divided night into four watches) when they encountered Jesus. One commentator tells us the disciples had been rowing, fighting the winds and waves, for nearly nine hours. They were exhausted.

Mark tells us that Jesus was on land and saw His disciples struggling against the wind and waves. Then in verse 48, Mark says:

"About three o'clock in the morning Jesus came toward them, walking on the water"
(NLT).

Do you notice what happened here? Jesus saw them in their struggle, but didn't immediately address the source of it. Instead, He waited.

Does that place feel familiar? In what way?



Remember we talked about needing to exercise that faith muscle of ours? Reread [verses 51-52](#).

It would seem Jesus intended the miracle they had just witnessed to strengthen their faith muscles, but they missed it. Rather than draw faith from witnessing the goodness of God and His provision, they cowered in the face of the rough waves.

While none of us have fed thousands from a sack lunch, I bet we could all point to moments where God's power was on full display in our lives.

What can you point back to and say, "Wow! That was God!"? How can remembering that experience help you find God's goodness in your "no more hard things" moments today?

While the disciples may have failed Faith 101 that day, Jesus didn't abandon them. Instead, He met them in their place of need. I love His words to them in Mark 6:50d-e (NLT):

"Take courage! I am here!"

Jesus expected them to be courageous though He hadn't yet calmed the wind and the waves. Why? Because they weren't alone in the storm. Jesus was there with them. We can take courage because He is with us, too.

One last thing here. Go back to [verse 45](#). What had Jesus told the disciples to do?



In the NLT, it says, “... **Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat** and head across the lake to Bethsaida ...” (Mark 6:45, emphasis added).

This is an important point I don’t want us to miss: They were in the boat at the direction of Jesus, so when the winds howled and the waves tossed them from side-to-side, *they were smack dab in the center of God’s will for them.*

Did it feel good? No.

Was it scary? Yes.

But were they right where they were meant to be in that moment? You betcha!

They didn’t understand and we don’t always either, but even in those moments, we can be assured of two things:

1. Whatever we’re facing, it doesn’t take God by surprise.
2. Even when we can’t feel God in the midst of our mess, He sees us right where we are. His goodness surrounds us always.

Wrapping It Up

One day, there will be no more hard things. Until that day comes, God invites us to trust and believe that He has a plan.

On our best days, He is good.

On our worst days, He is *still* good.

He is good. *Always.* And that’s something we can count on.

In this with you,
Stacy



Lesson 4

Bible Study Companion Leader: Trish Cordell



Welcome to Lesson 4 OBS friends. I'm thrilled to join you this week as we open God's Word together again. Please know it's my heartfelt prayer as you make your way through these lessons, you're growing more confident in studying God's Word.

I'm always fascinated by how much I don't know. If the Bible were an iceberg, my knowledge level would be at the tippy top. Normally, that would discourage me, but I find the more I study God's Word, the more enamored I am with who God is.

I don't have to understand everything the moment I read it. I share this to encourage you to keep moving forward. If I stopped every time I didn't understand something, I would've given up long ago. The enemy would like nothing more than for us to close our Bibles in frustration, than have it open getting to know God better. Join me as I say, "Not today, Satan. Not today!"

When I don't understand what I'm reading, I ask God to reveal it to me. Sometimes the revelation He sends is within minutes, other times days, weeks or longer. But, He's always faithful to show me in His time.

Before I even began writing this lesson, God was leading me to a "new to me" word: **providence** — or more specifically, divine providence. It's a word I was familiar with but wasn't fully sure what it meant. But the more God brought it to my attention, the more I knew I needed to learn. So, what's the first thing I did? I googled it and read a few other trusted biblical resources. I'll talk a little bit more about providence when we get to the sovereignty of God later in the lesson.

For now, let's just land on the fact that providence is a word that speaks to God having absolute control over His creation.



An often-quoted verse that speaks directly to God’s providence is [Romans 8:28](#). Write it in the space below.

Define the word “all” as you understand it.

Define “all things” as you understand it.

Hang with me here, I’m getting close to the point I’d like to make. It’s like a word puzzle, right? I’m not a huge fan of jigsaw puzzles, but I love watching how things connect. Taking the phrase “all things” from our verse, and what you understand or even researched about it, we can easily conclude that words like “fate,” “happenstance,” “karma,” and “circumstances” are still under God’s control ... His providence.

Author Nicki Korziarz explains it well on page 137:

“God has been and always will be sovereign over everything. God has the plan from beginning to end. But God is not controlling us in the process. We are actually the one in control over our actions, our words, our belief, our process.”

And, let’s not confuse God being in control of all things, with God controlling us. God gave us free will. He didn’t make us puppets. He graciously gives us the ability to either believe or not believe in His divine providence.

Simply stated by Nicki on page 139:

“God is in charge of the plan and I’m in control of my obedience.”

We see this time and time again throughout the Bible, including the story of Noah.

The Illusion of Control

When I entered the military many years ago, I still remember the advice a friend gave me before I left for basic training: “Don’t volunteer for anything.”



Since I knew very little about what I was getting myself into, I held onto that advice and played it on repeat in my mind. It gave me the illusion I had a little bit of control in what would happen at basic military training.

However, the military must have known new recruits weren't quick to volunteer, so they developed a seemingly innocent question and answer method that lulled me, and my fellow boot camp trainees, into a false sense of safety.

I'll never forget the first day, about 60 of us gathered together for our first meeting, and our Technical Instructor asked us "getting to know you" questions. Question after question, we responded by raising our hands. Then this question came: "*How many of you were ever in a marching band?*" I raised my hand, as did a few others. I had no way of knowing what would happen next. But, it was just the opposite of my friend's sage advice.

With hands still raised, the Technical Instructor quickly jumped into action, pointing to each of us, and barked out; "*1, 2, 3, 4, you're my squad leaders, and 5, you're my flag bearer.*" Wait, what? No, no, no! "I didn't volunteer," I shouted in my head! But I didn't speak up because my lips couldn't form any words.

Each of us sat there in stunned disbelief. This was my first official assignment. I'd been bamboozled and found myself "volunteered." Or as my friend Stacy says, "volunTOLD." Clearly, I was not in control of this volunteer thing.

So, who was in control when I got volunTOLD?

Let's take a look at [Proverbs 19:21](#) for some insight into this question. Whose purpose prevails?

On my own, I would have never volunteered. But God saw to it that His plan, not mine, would prevail.

Looking back, I now know that squad leader assignment was a divine appointment. In fact, becoming a squad leader was one of the best things to ever happen to me. God had gone before me. He was setting the stage for things I never saw coming.



Can you think of a time when you thought you were in control of a situation and just the opposite happened? Write about that here.

Looking back, can you see a place where God went before you and how He used the results for good? Use the space below to thank Him for His goodness and provision.

I can look back now and see God used that one appointment to lead to many others that continue into my present life. I bet you can do the same.

How does looking back at God's presence and His work in your past enable you to trust God with your future?

His Will Be Done

If you've spent any time studying the Bible, you no doubt have a favorite, or many favorite, stories. One of mine is Job. Yes, you read that correctly. I love the story of Job. I don't think everything that happens in the story of Job is awesome, but it gives me deep insight into the character of God.

Can I let you in on a little secret? Sometimes, I forget just how mighty our God is. Yikes! Maybe you do too? For me, the story of Job brings my finite thoughts back in alignment with my infinite Creator. I don't know about you, but I need the stability of a sovereign God in what often feels like an out-of-control world.



Before we dig into Job, let's revisit the two words I mentioned in the beginning. Providence and sovereignty. To get a better understanding of the word "sovereignty" and of how God reveals that sovereignty through His Word, let's consider John Piper's definition of sovereignty: "God's sovereignty is his right and power to do all that he decides to do." God's right AND God's power. Let's look up a few verses from God's Word that reveal and define His sovereignty.

- [Colossians 1:16-17](#)
- [Romans 11:33-35](#)
- [Psalm 103:19](#)
- [Jeremiah 32:17](#)
- [Acts 17:24-28](#)

What do these verses tell you about the power and character of God?

If you said, "He's the boss," you'd be right! Reading these truths and promises about God should help you better understand the bigger picture that's always happening in and around us. When you hear the phrase "God's got this," He really does!

Now let's go a bit deeper into the word "providence" and see how it relates to sovereignty. The use and definition of providence and sovereignty are very similar. Let's go back to our theologian and Bible scholar John Piper to learn a bit more. He explains their connection this way: providence is *how* God works out His sovereignty. It's examining God's intentional, wise and purposeful actions *as* He exercises His power and authority. In His providence, God sees to it that everything (His power and authority) works together for His purposes across both time and history.



I know these are two big concepts. Don't worry too much about fully understanding them. Mostly, know that they speak to God's absolute power and authority over the heavens and the earth and how He wisely and intentionally exercises that power and authority for His purposes.

Ready to dig into Job? Awesome! Me too.

Let's begin by reading [Job 1:1-12](#).

List the characters we meet.

Reread verse 8. What does God say about Job?

It may not make sense in our eyes, but God thinks so highly of Job that He permits Satan to test Job's faithfulness. God trusts Job will remain faithful through the trials that were about to be visited upon him. Did you notice? Don't miss this. God does not give Satan full authority over his actions against Job. This fact is so important to notice and remember.

How did God limit Satan in [Job 1:12](#)?

Does this leave any doubt who's in full control? God's power is greater than Satan's power. Always.

In the beginning of today's lesson, I referenced [Romans 8:28](#) and asked you to share your understanding of "all things." Friend, that includes the good and the bad things. All means all.

We will not always understand the ways of God, especially the bad things.



Read and write [Isaiah 55:8-9](#) below. Of what does this verse remind us?

When we question the “why’s” of God, we fall into the very human trap of putting God in a box. It’s usually because God isn’t doing something the way we would do something. When an outcome contradicts our belief system, it leaves room for doubt to creep in. When doubt creeps in, unbelief settles in. Unbelief of who God says He is and what He says He will do.

Sound familiar? It’s just as Nicki said on page 147:

“... the root of control is unbelief.”

If anyone could have been swayed into unbelief, the next passage reveals it’s our friend, Job. Let’s find out why, shall we? Read [Job 1:13-22](#). I’ll be right here when you get done!

Whew! That’s a lot to lose, wouldn’t you agree? What captures my attention? Job’s response to the tremendous amount of loss he suffered. Did you catch it? Was it unbelief? No, it sure wasn’t. He responded with worship. That’s right, worship. Yes, he did express mourning and intense grief for all he’d lost. We know this because he shaved his head, a sign of deep mourning. But, Job still worshipped in the midst of his grief.

He worshipped because He believed and trusted in God. Period. But, wait! As if losing most of his family and livestock weren’t enough, there’s still more.

Read [Job 2:1-7](#).

Did you get the sense of “if at first you don’t succeed, try, try again” where Satan is concerned? He approached God a second time about Job. Reread this portion of their conversation:

“... ‘He still holds fast his integrity, although you incited me against him to destroy him without reason.’ Then Satan answered the Lord and said, ‘Skin for skin! All that a man has he will give for his life. But stretch out your hand and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse you to your face.’ And the Lord said to Satan, ‘Behold, he is in your hand; only spare his life’” (Job 2:3-6, ESV).



Satan is relentless! But God!

Once again, what does God say about his servant, Job?

God permitted Satan to test Job again, but God again limited Satan's power and authority over Job.

Friend, only God has full authority over your life, and He gave that authority to His Son, Jesus. See for yourself in [Matthew 11:27](#) and [Matthew 28:18](#). What did you notice in the [Matthew 11:27](#) verse? Jesus uses the very same words, "all things" to establish His authority.

During Satan's second attack on Job, we find Job lamenting in Chapter 3, verses 3-5.

"Let the day perish on which I was born, and the night that said, 'A man is conceived.' Let that day be darkness! May God above not seek it, nor light shine upon it. Let gloom and deep darkness claim it. Let clouds dwell upon it; let the blackness of the day terrify it" (ESV).

Lamenting may be a new term for you. Lamenting is not the same as crying. It's a form of prayer. It's talking to God about our sorrow and pain. And, it's done with purpose. It's done to turn our hearts back to God because we know deep down He is trustworthy. Sometimes in the immediacy of our pain, we forget or can't quite trust yet. I encourage you to read [Job 3](#) in full to get a feel for what biblical lamenting is.

What my heart wants most for us as we finish up this section is that even in his lamenting, Job doesn't turn against God. Job somehow returns to remembering the faithfulness of God.



Where do you go first when you're in pain? God? Family? Friends? Why do you go to this person or people first?

If you go to God in your deepest pain, like Job did, how do you pray? Are you honest with God? Do you trust God to hear you and respond or do you wonder if He really hears and will respond?

If you don't go to God, why not? Do those to whom you turn (family, friends, counseling) help you come through the other side trusting God?

Job's story teaches that not only can we go to God, God wants us to come to Him. In fact, He's waiting for us to come, waiting to engage with us in our pain.

The Majesty of God

We could spend hours talking about Job and his interactions with his friends and his wife, but I think this is a great time to transition and place our focus on the majesty of God in this story. Why? Because that's exactly where God took Job after Job finished his lamenting.

Are you ready?

I remember the very first time I read these chapters and realized the awe of God. I have to confess, I wept. Let's pray before we begin.



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BY NICKI KOZIARZ

Father God, I thank You for the majesty of who You are. I thank You for being in charge of every single part of my life. Lord, I confess I don't always understand Your ways, but today I trust that all Your ways are good because every good and perfect gift comes from You, the Father of Lights. I trust that You are for me, with me, and no weapon formed against me shall prosper. I stand today in the knowledge that I'm Your precious child, fearfully and wonderfully made, having been knit together in my mother's womb. I proclaim there is nothing hidden from You, and I have nothing to fear. May I walk in godly confidence knowing You will never leave or forsake me. I boldly proclaim You are my God and where I see no way ahead, You are making a way. Today, I lift Your name high and give all thanks and praise to You for being my ever present help! Thank You, Jesus, for all You've done, all You're doing, and all that's yet to come. It's in Your sweet name, Jesus, I pray. What a beautiful name it is. Jesus, the name above all names. Amen.

Alright, we're going to read four chapters together, so be sure you're in a quiet place and get comfortable. Read [Job 38-41](#) and find out what God has to say!

Every single time I read these chapters, I'm awestruck. As you read through these chapters, how did you feel? Check all that apply and add any that you think of on your own.

- Mesmerized
- Awestruck
- Unworthy
- Flabbergasted
- Small
- Fortunate
- Insignificant
- Fascinated
- Surprised

Add your own responses here.

-
-
-
-

A gamut of emotions rush through my heart and mind as I read these chapters. I realize just how little control I have. Is it any wonder why it's God's will that be done and not our own?



FLOODED

BY NICKI KOZIARZ

Friends, God may have permitted Job to suffer through some awful things, but God never stopped loving Job. In fact, He set boundaries in place for Job's ultimate safety and protection.

I think we can agree Job went through some serious stuff! When you go through trials, do you wonder if God's stopped loving you? I know I have. I can assure you just as God still loved Job, He still loves you. How do I know? Read these words from Romans 8:38-39:

*"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."
(NIV)*

I'd like to point out another truth I'm thankful for. While we didn't dive into Job's relationship with his friends, after Job lost everything, they came and sat in the dirt with their friend. They mourned and grieved with him. And though they didn't always give Job the best advice, and sometimes even gave bad advice, they surrounded him in his time of need. It's a reminder that we're never alone in our trials.

I would be remiss if we didn't discuss "the rest of the story" ... God's restoration of Job. Let's read [Job 42:10-17](#).

How much more did the Lord restore Job's fortune?

That's right, double. Double for Job's trouble. Not only that, God blessed the later part of Job's life more than the former.

Hallelujah!

How does Job's story encourage you to persevere and trust in God's sovereignty — trust the fact that He is in control, even in the midst of your trials?



What's one truth or promise you will take from Job's story to carry with you into your next hard season?

Lastly, as we get ready to wrap up our time together, I'd like to backtrack to the "new to me" word we discussed in the beginning of our lesson: providence. I hope you can see now through what we studied, everything is under the providence of God.

Joyful Blessings,
Trish



Lesson 5

Bible Study Companion Leader: Nichole Stern

*This BSC addresses a sensitive topic. If you've been affected by sexual assault, whether it happened to you or someone you care about, **you're not alone**. Research reveals that sexual abuse and violence may affect as many as 1 in 3 women, and 1 in 6 men. One of our BSC writers wrote a book, *Hidden Joy in a Dark Corner*, sharing her triumph overcoming sexual assault through the power of God's Word. You can also find support from online.rainn.org or call the National Sexual Assault Hotline, 800.656.HOPE (4673), to speak with someone who can help.*



Hey y'all! Welcome to Lesson 5 of our Bible Study Companion for *Flooded*. It is always an honor to walk through Bible studies with you, and I'm looking forward to what God has for us in this week's lesson.

As I write, our world is a little over a year into the COVID-19 pandemic. Many of you, like me, are probably struggling to define and understand the new "normal" we've been forced into.

It's difficult to comprehend how God is working in situations like a global pandemic, but looking to Scripture can help guide us as we learn more about God and His faithfulness through any and all situations.

While we might not find ourselves in the midst of a literal flood like Noah, this last year has felt like a constant storm, including a deluge of "unprecedented" events pouring down upon us accompanied by winds of uncertainty and waves of loss that threaten to sweep us away. We're flooded spiritually, physically and emotionally, searching for a safe harbor to rest our weary souls.

Reading Nicki Koziarz's book, *Flooded*, and studying God's Word together couldn't come at a better time. As we seek God, He draws near, offering peace in His presence, even as the storms rage all around us.

I don't presume to know the specific difficulties you and your family have faced during this time, but I can assure you that you are not alone. My prayer is that you will be encouraged as you walk through *Flooded* with our P31 OBS community.



Let's pray.

Father God, we come before You in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank You, Lord for this privilege, that we can come to Your throne room of grace and place our praise and petitions at Your feet. Lord, I pray for each person walking through this study. I ask You to meet them where they are, and work in their hearts to bring them closer to You. I pray that as we spend time studying Your Word, we will fall more in love with You and become more like You. Bless our time as we seek to know You more. In Christ's name, amen.

In this lesson, we'll use Scripture and prayer to acknowledge and appreciate the faithfulness of God.

I hope you're ready to dig deep! Let's get started!

We're going to use a Bible Dictionary. If you don't have a hard copy, you can find one online [here](#) or [here](#).

Look up the word "faithful" and write the definition below:

I've included a couple of my favorite verses on God's faithfulness, as well as the respective Hebrew (Old Testament) and Greek (New Testament) words for faithfulness.

*"The steadfast love of the LORD never ceases; his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your **faithfulness**" (Lamentations 3:22-23, ESV, emphasis added).*

Faithfulness in this verse is the Hebrew word *ĕmûnâ*, which means "firmness; security; morally faith(-ful), stability, steady, truth."

Our next verse is 1 Corinthians 10:13,

*"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is **faithful**, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it" (ESV, emphasis added).*

Faithful in this verse is the Greek word *pistós*, which means "objectively, trustworthy; subjectively, trustful. God, abiding by His promises."



God's faithfulness is a recurring theme throughout the Old and New Testaments. God demonstrates His faithfulness in His continued willingness to enter covenant relationships with His people, including Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, David and each one of us through the cross of Christ.

Because God has fulfilled and continues to fulfill His promises without fail, we can believe with hopeful expectation that He will do all He has said He will do.

Dictionary.com defines faithful as: "true to one's word, promises, or vows. Steady in allegiance or affection; loyal; constant, reliable, trusted, or believed."

What people or things fit the definition of "faithful" in your life?

For me, it's my husband, Todd.

Y'all — this guy is as true as they come, but before you get jealous of me for winning the husband lottery, let me tell you a secret.

Before Jesus, Todd's word and his reliability were backed only by his human abilities. And he failed. A lot. Thankfully, Jesus works continually in His children to grow and change them to look more like Him. And that's what I watched happen in Todd's life. So as Todd (and each one of us) continue(s) to surrender to the will of God, he is/we are empowered to be more like God ... faithful, trustworthy and true.

My dog, Charleigh, is also reliable. I know she'll appear wherever she sees or smells cheese. Seriously y'all, she doesn't miss a trick when there's cheese involved.

Although I'm super blessed by my husband and my dog, their faithfulness cannot compare to God's faithfulness. Because unlike God, both Todd and Charleigh have and will let me down.

As amazing as Todd is, he once forgot to pay the power bill before he left the country for SIX WEEKS! This was before online bill pay was a thing, and I had to stay at a friend's house until I could get things sorted and get the power back on.



And, although Charleigh is a good doggie who will always show up for cheese, she'll leave you high and dry the second she hears car keys jingle.

Think of some situations where people have let you down and write them below or in your journal.

I know this can be a painful process, especially when the failures of others have caused physical and emotional pain. But, it's important to remember the unfaithfulness of others never negates the faithfulness of God. And when surrendered to Him, that pain and disappointment can point us to Christ if we allow it.

I experienced a particularly painful time in my life when people let me down. I was date raped when I was fifteen. I only told my brother and a few close friends because I saw how another friend who was similarly violated was treated with callous judgement when she went forward with her story.

People failed her and the system failed her. Knowing this, I just couldn't gather the strength to expose my battered soul to the possibility of being treated with that same callous judgement so cruelly shown to my friend. If I'm honest, there are still times I have to remind myself that it was not God who failed me, but man. There was nothing acceptable about what I went through, and there is nothing that will change what happened, but as I've invited God into this painful place, He has brought peace where there was only pain and healing where there was only hurt, and He offers that same peace and healing to you.

This earth and its inhabitants are broken, and we cannot depend on broken people and things to satisfy the deepest longings of our souls.

Only God can do that.

Biblical Examples of God's Faithfulness

Scripture gives example after example of God's faithfulness throughout biblical history and we can draw on these examples to remind us of His continued faithfulness today.

Look up the verses in the chart below and write what you learn about God's faithfulness in the column next to the verse. I've completed the first one as an example.



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BY NICKI KOZIARZ

Verse	What this teaches me about God's faithfulness
Genesis 6:8 , Genesis 6:18 , Genesis 6:22 , Genesis 7:5 , Genesis 8:1 .	Noah found favor with God, and God established a covenant with Noah. Noah did all that God commanded Him, and God remembered Noah and his family as He caused the flood waters to recede.
Exodus 34:6	
Deuteronomy 7:9	
Joshua 21:43-45	
2 Thessalonians 3:3	
2 Timothy 2:13	
Hebrews 10:23	



Now that we've studied examples of God's faithfulness in Scripture, devote some time recounting His faithfulness in your life. *I encourage you to dedicate time to this exercise; maybe come back and add to it each day during this study, and keep it in a journal to refer back to when you're in need of encouragement.*

As Nicki continues to take us through Noah's story, I've wondered how Noah and his family must have felt. Literally trapped inside for months, tossed to and fro as the rains poured and poured with no land on the horizon, and no sun in the sky. Y'all — it once rained here for three days straight and I thought I would lose my mind. I can't even.

So I wonder, did Noah ever lose hope? Did he think God had forgotten him?

How about you? Are you tossed around, adrift in a sea of disappointment and hurt with no hope in sight, wondering if God has forgotten you?

Sister, God sees you and He holds every tear you've cried.

Please read [Psalm 56:1-13](#) with me and then we're going to pray these words back to God to help renew our hope in His faithfulness. Praying Scripture can be as simple as reading the verses aloud to God or using each verse to help direct our specific prayers.

For example:



“God, thank You for being gracious to me. When I feel afraid, I know I can put my trust in You. I praise You, Lord, because even when it feels I’m surrounded by the enemy, You are for me and You are with me.”

Now it’s your turn. Take a few minutes to pray Psalm 56:1-13.

I don’t know about you, but sometimes God’s faithfulness feels like an abstract idea that only others experience. But as we study His Word, we see God’s faithfulness is personal and available to all of His people yesterday, today, and forever. Here are some tangible ways God is faithful.

1. God is faithful to forgive our sin ([1 John 1:8-9](#))

Needing forgiveness means we’ve done something that needs to be forgiven. That something is sin. Sin isn’t a popular topic of conversation, which might be why one of the top reasons people give for avoiding church is that the (sin) messages are “negative” and make them feel bad.

Friends, I’m not here to make you feel bad, but there is a fundamental truth we must grasp before we can experience the faithfulness and freedom found in Christ.

We are *all* sinners in desperate need of a Savior.

Take some time to reflect on the sins that nailed Christ to the cross. For example, those sins we act upon like lying, gossiping, unkind words and those sins harbored within our hearts like having a critical spirit or envying others. Please know this should be a time of thankful confession and praise, not guilt and condemnation. ([Romans 8:1](#)) Read and meditate on [Psalm 51](#) using the words as a guide in your time of confession.

Praise God for the gift of awareness of sin in our lives because it’s our awareness that drives us back to the cross of Christ seeking the extravagant love, forgiveness and amazing grace that can only be found in Him.

Our sinfulness is the bad news, but thankfully, that’s not where our stories end. The good news is that we have a Savior whose sacrifice for us became salvation to us. We no longer have to live enslaved by sin because Christ has set us free. ([Romans 6:22-23](#))



If you're joining us and you're unsure where you stand with God, may I encourage you to take time to read through the following verses?

Romans 3:23 - *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (ESV).

Romans 6:23 - *"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"* (ESV).

Romans 10:9-10 - *"... if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved"* (ESV).

Romans 10:13 - *"For 'everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved'"* (ESV).

Christ's life, death and resurrection has secured our reconciliation to God; we only have to believe it and receive it by:

- Admitting our sinfulness and need for forgiveness.
- Confessing our sins.
- Thanking God for Jesus' death on the cross that paid the price for our sins.
- Asking Him to be Lord of our lives.

If you accepted Christ as your Lord and Savior today, please leave a comment on the blog. Our volunteers can't wait to connect with you! We also encourage you to get plugged into a Bible believing church and to surround yourself with other Christians who will encourage and pray for you. Also, please continue to read your Bible to deepen your new found faith and grow in your knowledge of Jesus Christ!

2. God is faithful to fulfill His promises past, present and future

Past

We find many Old Testament promises in the New Testament, and those promises remain true even to this day.



Here's an example where we find a promise from the Old Testament quoted in the New Testament:

Read [Joshua 1:5](#) and [Hebrews 13:5](#). What is the promise that carries through from the Old Testament to the New?

Here are a few more promises from both the Old and New Testament. Read each verse and share what you learn about God's promises and His faithfulness to keep those promises.

[1 Kings 8:56](#), [Romans 1:1-7](#), [Galatians 3:7-9](#), and [Ephesians 1:4-5](#)

Present

God's faithfulness isn't limited to His past promises. Yes, He has already saved us, but He remains faithful still today. God's grace continually renews, restores and refreshes His children.

Charles Spurgeon wrote in his book, *All of Grace*, "The saints shall persevere in holiness, because God perseveres in grace."

Read [2 Corinthians 4:16](#) and [Ephesians 1:7-9](#).

We are being renewed day by day with God's continued extravagant grace.



Where have you seen God’s faithfulness and grace in your life or the life of another?

Future

And if past and present isn’t enough, God’s faithfulness extends to all generations ... far into the future. In fact, into eternity!

Our hope is secure and our future inheritance is *“imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven”* for us ([1 Peter 1:4, ESV](#)).

We can confidently set our hope on Christ’s promises as we wait for *“new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells”* ([1 Peter 3:13, ESV](#)).

Christ will return for His church. ([Revelation 22:12](#))

How does knowing Jesus will return for His bride (His Church) give you hope for today?

Faithfulness is part of God’s character.

God’s faithfulness reveals His trustworthiness in the most spectacular way by fulfilling His Old Testament promise for a coming Messiah in the person of Jesus Christ.

Read the verses below and explain how they point to God’s faithful character.

[Psalm 18:1-2](#)



[1 Corinthians 1:9](#)

[1 Thessalonians 5:23-24](#)

Closing Words.

Friends, regardless of what storms may come, God is faithful and He is worthy of our praise. Spend time worshipping Him, using the verses below for inspiration.

[1 Chronicles 16:34-36](#)

[Psalm 13:5](#)

[Psalm 25](#)

[Isaiah 25:1](#)

[Hebrews 13:14-16](#)

I've learned so much through this lesson, and I hope you have too! I'd like to close with one of my favorite quotes from *Flooded*:

"Faith and fear both fight for you to believe in something you cannot see. Choose your battle wisely. Build your life even wiser. Make decisions which lead to obedience" (p. 195).

Let's choose to believe in God's faithfulness, living our lives with joyful hope in His promises.

Choosing joy with you,
Nichole