

hidden joy in a dark corner

BY WENDY BLIGHT

Week 2

Bible Study Companion Leader: Katrina V. Wylie



Hello, friend! I'm proud of you for opening this lesson, so we can open God's Word together and learn more about Him and His Word. I'm believing, as we do, He's going to do what Wendy Blight said He'd do in *Hidden Joy in a Dark Corner* — open your heart and mind to what His Word says. It's my prayer that as He does, your trust in Him will grow.

Progressing Toward Complete Freedom:

Last week, I shared a bit about my dark corner that began during the long, difficult labor of my daughter, and continued with health complications for myself. For a long time, one word came to mind when trying to describe how I felt — broken. But I couldn't quite explain why. Yes, actual physical brokenness occurred, but that didn't fully encompass the brokenness I felt. It wasn't until many years later that I realized it was the breaking of my trust in God that truly had me feeling so shattered and shaken.

Goodness, that's hard to admit! Because of that severed trust, like Wendy, I questioned God and came to the same three possible conclusions she shared with us in Chapter 2 of *Hidden Joy*. Either...

1. God did not have the power to stop what happened to me.
2. God is all-powerful, but He didn't care enough to intervene.
3. God is all-powerful and loves me greatly but allowed it to happen anyway. But why?

*Circle any of the three you've found yourself pondering through your dark corner. Star the one you land and get stuck on the most.

When we entertain these thoughts, what we're really doing is questioning and doubting *God's character*. When we question if He has the power to stop what happens to us, we're doubting *His sovereignty*. When we question if He cares enough about us to intervene, we're doubting *His love*. When we question why He allowed something to happen to us, we're doubting *His wisdom*. And, ultimately, when we're questioning these characteristics of God, we're doubting the *Truth of His Word*.

Do you want to be free from everything that keeps you bound in your dark corner? It's difficult to find freedom when we question and doubt the very things that bring us true freedom. Like Wendy learned and shares in Chapter 3 of *Hidden Joy*, "*God's Truth, His Word, is the key. It was the one thing I needed to progress toward complete freedom.*" So let's dig into God's Word, learn about Him and progress toward freedom!

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Trusting God's Character

*Based on the characteristic(s) of God you struggle with (His sovereignty, love or wisdom), choose one (or more, depending on your available time) to dig further into.

God's Sovereignty:

In Chapter 2 of *Hidden Joy*, Wendy teaches us that "sovereignty" means, "one who possesses supreme power." Believing God is sovereign requires us to know both God's power AND that His power is supreme (the paramount authority, superior to all other things). When we don't know and believe these two truths about God, it's easy to question Him having the power to stop what happens to us.

Many verses in Scripture speak to both God's power and supremacy. [Isaiah 40:28 \(NIV\)](#) tells us He's the "everlasting God" and "Creator of the ends of the earth." That He doesn't "grow tired or weary," and "his understanding no one can fathom." From [Psalm 147:5 \(NIV\)](#) we learn He's "great" and "mighty in power" and "his understanding has no limit." And [Jeremiah 32:27 \(NIV\)](#) makes clear He's "the God of all mankind." Nothing is "too hard" for Him.

*Do you struggle more with questioning/doubting God's supremacy, or His power? Why?

*If you struggle with trusting God's supremacy, look up and read the additional verses below, jotting down next to each what you learn about His supremacy.

- Deuteronomy 10:17 _____
- 1 Chronicles 29:11 _____
- 1 Timothy 6:15 _____

*If you struggle with trusting God's power, look up and read the additional verses below, jotting down next to each what has been, or is still being done, through His power.

- Exodus 15:6 _____
- Jeremiah 10:12 _____
- 1 Corinthians 6:14 _____
- Ephesians 3:20 _____
- Colossians 1:16 _____
- 2 Peter 1:3 _____

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Homeschooling my daughter taught me so much about her, myself and the various school subjects. What surprised me the most is how, through it, I've gained a deeper, more personal understanding of God's sovereignty. Not only has it caused me to have to rely on God's power more to overcome the many everyday challenges, but I've also learned more about His sovereignty as we've studied His Word. Particularly the story of creation.

*If time allows, look up and read [Genesis 1](#) in the NIV translation. You can use [biblegateway.com](#) if needed.

- What are the first three words in verses 3, 6, 9, 14, 20, 24 and 26?

- What are the last four words in verses 7, 9, 11, 15 and 24?

*Looking at these words, what do they tell us about how God created everything and about His power?

Friend, not only is God powerful, but His *Word* is powerful. And not just His Word, but more specifically, His *spoken* Word. All He has to do is speak and *anything* can be made "so."

*How does knowing God is sovereign comfort you and/or make you more confused in your circumstances?

*Looking back, how have you personally experienced God's sovereignty?

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God's Love:

This week's memory verses, Romans 8:38-39 (NIV), speak about God's love:

*"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."*

*What does this verse teach us about God's love?

For years, I felt abandoned by God. This question consumed my mind: *"Does God still love me, even though...?"*

*...even though I turned to pain relief medications for help, rather than His strength.
...even though I turned to food for comfort, rather than to Him.
...even though I turned away from Him through it all, rather than drew closer.
...even though I stopped regularly going to church and reading His Word.
...even though I grew angry, allowing my words and actions to slip into sin.*

*Have you ever felt abandoned by God? What was the situation?

*What specifically causes you to question God's love for you?

*Go back to our memory verse. Underline the words "anything" and "all." Then circle what the verse tells us CAN'T separate us from the love of God.

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Because I'm a "word" person by nature, I Googled the words *convinced*, *anything* and *all* to gain a broader understanding of their meaning. Here's what I found:

Convinced - completely certain about something. Firm in one's belief with regard to a particular course or issue. (Synonyms: persuade, satisfy, prove, cause to feel certain, assure, reassure, put/set someone's mind at rest, dispel someone's doubts.)

Anything - used to refer to a thing, no matter what. Used for emphasis. Used to indicate a range.

All - used to refer to the whole quantity or extent of a particular group or thing. (Synonyms: each, every, whole, entire, complete, total, full, utter, maximum.)

These words help me read this passage with a new, broader perspective and personal depth:

*For I (Katrina), am **convinced** (completely certain, firm in my belief, assured and reassured, mind at rest and doubt dispelled), that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, (neither turning to pain relief meds for strength nor food for comfort, nor turning away from God, neither irregularly going to church and reading His Word, nor slipping into sin due to my anger) nor **ANYTHING ELSE** (no matter what) in **all** (each, every, the whole, entire, complete, total) creation, will be able to separate me from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

*Now it's your turn. Personalize our verse by inserting the definitions that speak most to you, and the things that have caused you to question God's love for you.

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*How is this verse helping you feel more love and trust in and from God when it comes to your loss, hurt or trial?

God's Wisdom:

Though I questioned God's sovereignty and love, ultimately I got stuck on the "Why" question. *Why* God allowed me to walk through such a painful journey. I questioned God's wisdom and what possible reason He could've had to not intervene. His failure to intervene on my behalf seemed unwise. But, as Wendy teaches us in Chapter 2, the word "wisdom" derives from the Hebrew word *chokmah*, which refers to a person's technical skills or special abilities AND "the knowledge and the ability to make right choices at the opportune time."

There are many verses in the Bible that speak of God's wisdom. From [Jeremiah 10:12](#) and [51:15 \(NIV\)](#), we learn God "*founded the world by his wisdom and stretched out the heavens by his understanding.*" [Psalm 104:24 \(NIV\)](#) tells us He made all earth's creatures in wisdom. And we learned through the story of creation in [Genesis 1](#) that all He created was declared "good." Surely if He can wisely construct the world, its creatures and the heavens, He can also wisely establish our lives, even our dark days. Let's dig further for more convincing.

*Look up and read the verses below. Jot down next to each how God's wisdom is described.

- Job 9:4 _____
- Job 12:13 _____
- Isaiah 28:29 _____
- Romans 11:33 _____

Profound, magnificent, deep, rich — that's the kind of wisdom I want establishing my life! That's the kind of wisdom God has and gives ... even when we can't perceive it as such. You see, there's one more thing about wisdom that's important for us to understand. God's wisdom is not the same as ours. There's a difference between heavenly and worldly wisdom.

*Look up and read [Isaiah 55:8-9](#) and [James 3:13-18](#). How does knowing God has heavenly wisdom comfort you in your circumstance?

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*Looking back, how has God's wisdom been evident in your life?

Checking Your Progress:

Friend, God is sovereign. God loves you. God is wise. He's all these things and SO much more. He wants to continue to reveal more and more of Himself to you. He wants you to come to know Him fully and personally, to trust Him and find freedom from your dark corner.

*How has studying God's character changed your perspective of Him and your trust in Him?

*How does your new perspective/trust of God help your current situation or circumstance?

As we close our time together, remember something important. Growing our trust in anything, including God, takes time. So, if you're not there yet, don't worry and don't give up! Allow your questions, your doubts, your hesitations to pull you *into* God and His Word, rather than push you away.

I'm praying this for you,
Kat

P.S. Don't forget the "Seed Seeking" page I gave at the end of [last week's Bible Study Companion](#) that you can use to record the *personal messages, powerful truths, amazing love* and *everlasting hope* God reveals to you each week.

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Week 2 Bonus Lesson - Trusting God's Word

Learning more about who God is helps us to trust Him more, which is good. But, if we don't also grow our trust in God's Word, we may continue to question if God really is who the Bible says He is. Let's use the tool Wendy used in Chapter 3 of *Hidden Joy*, to deepen her understanding of God's Word. In case you forgot or haven't read it yet, she wanted to learn more about the word "word," so she looked it up in the concordance in the back of her Bible. A concordance is one way of doing what's considered "a topical word study."

*Now it's your turn to do a topical word study on "word." Here are several ways to do it.

1. Turn to the concordance in your Bible and look up "word."
2. Use your Bible (or an online source such as BibleGateway) to look up and read the verses listed under "word" in your concordance.
3. As you read the verses, use the next page of this companion to fill in the verse references and what each teaches you about God's Word.
4. After you're done, answer the final two questions below.

Note: Depending on your available time and the depth you want to go, you can print multiple copies of the next page and look up all the verses listed, OR choose a few that seem most applicable. You may also look up similar words, such as: *words, scripture, scriptures*. You can even use the next page to do completely different word studies too!

*How has studying these verses changed and grown your perspective of God's Word?

*How does your new perspective of God's Word help your perspective of your circumstance?

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Topical Word Study

Main Topic Word:

Similar Words:

Verse Reference:

I learned:

Verse Reference:

I learned:

Verse Reference:

I learned:

Verse Reference:

I learned:

Verse Reference:

I learned:
