



# Week 1 Study Sheet

---

## Better, Not Bitter

### Introduction

Here is a riddle. What is something everyone needs but few ever give? What forgets but also remembers? What hurts and at the same time heals? What acknowledges wrongdoing and at the same time atones for wrongful actions? Can you guess the word? Forgiveness.

Our understanding of forgiveness changes as we age. As children, we learn to forgive a friend for taking a toy, or to forgive a friend who started a rumor about us. As we age, if our understanding of forgiveness remains unchanged, then we miss the healing power of forgiveness, and instead witness the opposite. Our heart hardens. Time makes it harder to forgive the preputial wrong doer. Time makes it easy to go numb from the recurring inauthenticity of an apology.

Forgiveness can be an easy thing to talk about, and a hard thing to live out. Yet, it is central to the message of God through his son Jesus. The very birth of Jesus was an act of forgiveness. His whole life displayed it, his death atoned for it, and his resurrection justified it. Yes, forgiveness is the deep well where our bitterness turns into “better-ness.” It is not just a gift we receive from Jesus, but it is also the gift we give because of Jesus.

### Pray

In your personal prayer time, thank God for his forgiveness extended to you, thank God for the forgiveness others have given you, and ask God if there is someone you need to extend forgiveness to.

*Lord, forgive us of our daily sins as we forgive others. Amen.*

### Read

[Matthew 18:21-35](#)

### Study

What words repeat, contrast, or stick out to you as you read this passage?

What are the qualities or actions of the servant?

What character reflects God in this parable, and why?

How have you experienced forgiveness like Jesus is teaching about?

Have you had to extend forgiveness to someone repeatedly?

### Read

[John 20:19-23](#)

### Study

What are the themes of this passage?

What is the Holy Spirit's role in forgiveness?

What is our role in forgiveness?

### Meditate

Spend 10 minutes each day this week centering your thoughts on forgiveness. Pray, read, study, and meditate on the teachings in Matthew 18 and John 20. As you meditate, consider how God is challenging you to receive his forgiveness and give it to others.



# Week 2 Study Sheet

---

## Worship, Not Worry

### Introduction

Have you ever heard a song that you love, and felt the worries of the world fade away? Maybe you are in your car on a warm summer night. Maybe you are riding along with a friend. Regardless, there is not a worry on your mind, there's not a care in the air. Only joy, fun, and hope.

This is the way God intended for our life to be. Free from worry. We were created to be worshipers. We worship through song, devotion, practices, and actions. Yet, the key to this worship is the focus. The way God planned for worship was for him to be the focus. Not because he is narcissistic but because he is good. He doesn't want us to worry about the bad things around us. He doesn't want us to focus on the things that are imperfect, neglected, and impossible.

Rather, he wants us to focus on him – the One who is in control of it all. Focus on the One who cares for it all. He wants to be in the car with us, instilling the hope that we have in him. Worship is the act of not worrying because of the hope that is only found in him. What worries are you carrying this week that you can turn over to God through worship? What song is God trying to play in your heart to remind you of the hope that you have in him?

### Pray

In your personal prayer time, thank God for the hope you have in him.

*Lord, let your kingdom come and your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Amen.*

### Read

[Isaiah 26:1-6](#)

### Study

What encouraging phrases stand out in this passage?

What main points do you take from the text?

How do Isaiah's words inspire you?

When do you worry the most?

How can these words build our hope?

### Read

[Matthew 6:25-34](#)

### Study

How do Matthew's words connect worship with worry?

What anxieties have you faced in life?

How do you address your own anxiety?

How can worship help you with worry?

What singular thought from this text helps to have hope over our anxiety?

### Meditate

Spend 10 minutes each day this week centering your thoughts on hope. Pray, read, study, and meditate on the teachings in Isaiah 26 and Matthew 6. As you meditate, consider how God is encouraging you to have hope and to worship through your worry.



# Week 3 Study Sheet

---

## A Trusting Heart, Not a Troubled Heart

### Introduction

Have you ever participated in a trust fall at a teambuilding event? The purpose of a trust fall is to prove that we can trust others. No one likes this exercise. Standing on a chair or stage and then falling blindly backwards into the arms of your peers is scary. Even if you trust them, things can still go wrong. Someone could get distracted and move at the wrong time, or the catching team could miscalculate the number of people required to catch the faller. Ouch.

Trusting can be painful; especially if we've miscalculated in the past. And we've all done it - we have placed our trust in the wrong people, the wrong things, or even in the wrong places. All this misplaced trust makes trusting in God difficult. Even though he has kept every promise, and remained present in every crisis, we can struggle to trust him.

How have you allowed past events or relationships to cause you to mistrust God? How is God challenging you to trust him now?

### Pray

In your personal prayer time, thank God for the trust you can have in him.

*Lord, give us this day our daily bread. Amen.*

### Read

[John 6:1-14](#)

### Study

What words, phrases, and characters stand out from this passage?

Are there any important themes or contrasting thoughts from the passage?

How does Jesus challenge the disciples to trust him more?

Which character do you resonate with the most and why?

Have you experienced a situation like this before?

How did Jesus help you trust him more?

### Read

[Proverbs 3:5-6](#)

### Study

How can "leaning on your own understanding" cause you to focus on your troubles?

What does "all your ways" mean to you?

How is God challenging you to trust him more through this Proverb?

How can we trust God more through submission?

What is it that you need to submit to him?

### Meditate

Spend 10 minutes each day this week centering your thoughts on trust. Pray, read, study, and meditate on the teachings in John 6 and Proverbs 3. As you meditate, consider how God is encouraging you trust him more with your troubles.



# Week 4 Study Sheet

---

## Seek to Serve, Not be Served

### Introduction

In a consumer driven world, serving others is low on our to-do list. We fill our days with activities that make our lives better- the gym to tone our body, a podcast to enhance our I.Q., a shopping trip to get the latest gadget for our home.

Serving others seems more like a chore; something we do out of obligation. Yet, serving others is at the core of Christianity. It's no wonder then, that there is often an emotional "high" when you serve someone. Or that there is an increased sense of comradery when we serve as a team together. When we serve others, our own hang-ups and problems become less magnified in our life. When we think about others more than ourselves, we tend to be happier and filled with more joy.

Jesus told his disciples in Mark 10:45, that he did not come to be served but to serve others through his life. Jesus' life was focused on serving others. He did through his birth, life, death, and resurrection. He is still doing it today through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. How have you benefited from serving others? What do you believe is the key ingredient in serving others?

### Pray

In your personal prayer time, invite God to empower you with humility.

*Lord, all I do is to bring glory, honor, and praise to your name. Amen.*

### Read

[Mark 10:35-45](#)

### Study

Who are the key people in this passage?

What are the issues being raised within the conversation?

What perspective did the disciples have?

What perspective does Jesus have?

What principle do you think Jesus is teaching the disciples and us?

### Read

[James 4:1-12](#)

### Study

What phrases, words, or concepts stick out to you as you read the passage?

How can you relate to questions that James is asking?

How does humility help us serve others?

What things can cause us to be prideful?

How can we better serve others when we apply James' teachings?

### Meditate

Spend 10 minutes each day this week centering your thoughts on humility. Pray, read, study, and meditate on the teachings in Mark 10 and James 4. As you meditate, consider how God is encouraging you seek out ways to serve others and not yourself.