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The Power of Knowing God



Kay Arthur

PRECEPT MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

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BIBLE STUDIES

The Power of Knowing God

THE POWER OF KNOWING GOD
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HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This small-group study is for people who are interested in learning for themselves more about what the Bible says on various subjects, but who have only limited time to meet together. It's ideal, for example, for a lunch group at work, an early morning men's group, a young mothers' group meeting in a home, a Sunday-school class, or even family devotions. (It's also ideal for small groups that typically have longer meeting times—such as evening groups or Saturday morning groups—but want to devote only a portion of their time together to actual study, while reserving the rest for prayer, fellowship, or other activities.)

This book is designed so that all the group's participants will complete each lesson's study activities *at the same time*. Discussing your insights drawn from what God says about the subject reveals exciting, life-impacting truths.

Although it's a group study, you'll need a facilitator to lead the study and keep the discussion moving. (This person's function is *not* that of a lecturer or teacher. However, when this book is used in a Sunday-school class or similar setting, the teacher should feel free to lead more directly and to bring in other insights in addition to those provided in each week's lesson.)

If *you* are your group's facilitator, the leader, here are some helpful points for making your job easier:

- Go through the lesson and mark the text before you lead the group. This will give you increased familiarity with the material and will enable you to facilitate the group with greater ease. It may be easier for you to lead the group through the instructions for marking if you, as a leader, choose a specific color for each symbol you mark.

- As you lead the group, start at the beginning of the text and simply read it aloud in the order it appears in the lesson, including the “insight boxes,” which appear throughout. Work through the lesson together, observing and discussing what you learn. As you read the Scripture verses, have the group say aloud the word they are marking in the text.
- The discussion questions are there simply to help you cover the material. As the class moves into the discussion, many times you will find that they will cover the questions on their own. Remember, the discussion questions are there to guide the group through the topic, not to squelch discussion.
- Remember how important it is for people to verbalize their answers and discoveries. This greatly strengthens their personal understanding of each week’s lesson. Try to ensure that everyone has plenty of opportunity to contribute to each week’s discussions.
- Keep the discussion moving. This may mean spending more time on some parts of the study than on others. If necessary, you should feel free to spread out a lesson over more than one session. However, remember that you don’t want to slow the pace too much. It’s much better to leave everyone “wanting more” than to have people dropping out because of declining interest.
- If the validity or accuracy of some of the answers seems questionable, you can gently and cheerfully remind the group to stay focused on the truth of the Scriptures. Your object is to learn what the Bible says, not to engage in human philosophy. Simply stick with the Scriptures and give God the opportunity to speak. His Word *is* truth (John 17:17)!

THE POWER OF KNOWING GOD

So much of our confusion and pain, uncertainty and wrong decisions in life come because we do not know God. We may know about Him. We may know what others say about Him. But do we know what God says about Himself? Do we know for ourselves who He really is, how He conducts Himself in the affairs of mankind?

When we know God as He really is, we have a power in our lives, an ability to stand firm. A true understanding of God's character leads not just to knowledge but to action.

"...the people who know their God will display strength and take action."

—*Daniel 11:32*

Knowing God enables us, as believers, to display strength in times of stress and take action when the rest of world seems to be immobile.

Through the truths uncovered in this study you will get to know God as never before. In doing so, your strength and faith will increase. You'll be able to stand in confidence, having seen for yourself who your God is, what He wants, and how we can live in relationship with Him.

WEEK ONE

The Bible—a book God tells us was recorded by man but inspired by Him (2 Timothy 3:16)—begins with God. It ends with God. And everything between the first book of the Bible, Genesis, and the last, Revelation, has to do with God and His relationship with mankind. What an awesome truth, to know that the God of the universe wants to be in relationship with us!

In the sixty-six books that comprise the Bible, you can discover for yourself all God wants you to know about Him, about His ways, and about how you as a human being can have a loving and personal relationship with Him. A relationship that will carry you through any situation, any circumstance of life.

The purpose of *The Power of Knowing God* is to help you see and understand for yourself who God says He is. A personal knowledge of God will enable you to be strong, to stand firm, and to take the action that is needed to handle every situation of life (Daniel 11:32b). Hang on tight for an eye-opening experience and a lot of interesting discussion as to the practicality of knowing God for who He says He is!

OBSERVE

How does God begin the Bible? How does He introduce Himself to mankind in the book at claims to be the very Word of God?

Leader: Read Genesis 1:1–5 aloud. Have the group say aloud and...

GENESIS 1:1–5

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.



2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the

surface of the deep,
and the Spirit of God
was moving over the
surface of the waters.

3 Then God said,
“Let there be light”;
and there was light.

4 God saw that the
light was good; and
God separated the
light from the dark-
ness.

5 God called the
light day, and the
darkness He called
night. And there was
evening and there was
morning, one day.

- mark each reference to **God**, including pronouns, with a triangle, like this: 
- draw a squiggly line like this  under the phrase **Then God said**.
- circle the word (**day**).
- underline the entire phrase referring to **time**.

As you read the text, it's helpful to have the group say the key words aloud as they mark them. This way everyone will be sure they are marking every occurrence of the word, including any synonymous words or phrases. Do this throughout the study.

DISCUSS

- What did you learn from marking the references to God and His activities in these first five verses of the Bible?
- What does God tell us about how He did what He did?

- Was anyone present besides God?
- How many days pass in verses 1–5?
- How is a day described?

OBSERVE

From Genesis 1:6 to Genesis 1:25 God tells us all that He created except for one final thing. We'll look at that next.

Leader: *Read Genesis 1:26–28, 31–2:1 aloud. Once again have the group say and...*

- mark each reference to **God**, including pronouns, with a triangle.
- draw a squiggly line under the phrase **God said**.
- draw a box around every reference to **man**, including the pronouns:
- circle the word *(day)*.
- underline the entire phrase referring to **time**.

GENESIS 1:26–28, 31–2:1

²⁶ Then God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.”

²⁷ God created man in His own image, in

the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.

28 God blessed them; and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over every living thing that moves on the earth.” ...

31 God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.

DISCUSS

- What did you learn about God in these verses?
- What did you learn about man?
- How does this compare with what you’ve been taught, or what you believe, about the creation of man?
- On what day did the creation of man take place?
- If you had to summarize in one word what you’ve learned about God in Genesis 1:1–2:4, what word would you use, and why?
- According to all God has told us thus far in the Bible, how did He accomplish the things described in these verses?

OBSERVE

Did you notice in Genesis 1:26 the pronouns God used when speaking of the creation of man—the *Us* and *Our*? He said, “Let Us make man in Our image.” Why the plural pronouns? Who is the *Us*, the *Our*? In Genesis 1:2 you saw the Spirit of God active in creation as He moved over the surface of the waters. But there is still another included in the *Us*.

Leader: Read John 1:1–4, 14–18 and have the group...

- mark every reference to **the Word**, including pronouns and synonyms, with a cross: †
- mark every reference to **God** with a triangle.
- circle each reference to **time**, such as **beginning, after, and before**.
- underline each phrase referring to **time**.

DISCUSS

- Moving verse by verse, discuss what you learned from marking the references to the Word.

JOHN 1:1–4, 14–18

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

² He was in the beginning with God.

³ All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

⁴ In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men....

¹⁴ And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

15 John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, “He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’”

16 For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace.

17 For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

18 No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him.

- In verse 15, what did you learn from John’s testimony about the Word? By the way, the text eventually makes clear that this is a reference to John the Baptist, not the apostle John who wrote this gospel.
- Read verses 17–18 again. What is the Word’s name? How is He described in verse 18?
- Where was the Word in the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth?
- How does what we’ve just learned fit with what we saw in Genesis?

OBSERVE

Now let's see what God the Father says about the Son.

Leader: Read Hebrews 1:8–12 slowly.

- *Have the group mark every reference to **the Son** with a cross. Mark all synonyms and pronouns the same way.*

DISCUSS:

- Move through this passage in Hebrews verse by verse and discuss what God tells you about the Son.

HEBREWS 1:8–12

⁸ But of the Son He says, “Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, and the righteous scepter is the scepter of His kingdom.

⁹ “You have loved righteousness and hated lawlessness; therefore God, Your God, has anointed You with the oil of gladness above Your companions.”

¹⁰ and, “You, Lord, in the beginning laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of Your hands;

¹¹ they will perish, but You remain; and they all will become old like a garment,

12 and like a mantle
 You will roll them up;
 like a garment they
 will also be changed.
 But You are the same,
 and Your years will not
 come to an end.”

COLOSSIANS 1:13–16

13 For He [God] rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son,

14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

- Did you see anything that would support the Son of God as being a participant in Creation? Discuss this.

OBSERVE

There's more we need to see about the Son of God in Colossians. You'll see why you were created.

***Leader:** Read Colossians 1:13–16 and have the group mark...*

- each reference to **God**, including pronouns, with a triangle.
- every reference to God's beloved Son, **Jesus**, with a cross. Watch carefully for the pronouns.

DISCUSS

- What did you learn from marking the references to the Son? Don't miss a thing.
- Look again at verse 16. What correlation, or similarity, do you find here with the creation account of Genesis 1?
- What, specifically, can the Son do for mankind and on what basis?
- According to Colossians 1:16, why was man created?
- If you believed that—really took it to heart—what would it mean to you personally?

15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation.

16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him.

PSALM 90:1–2

¹ Lord, You have been our dwelling place in all generations.

² Before the mountains were born or You gave birth to the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, You are God.

HEBREWS 11:1–3, 6

¹ Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

² For by it the men of old gained approval.

³ By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was not

OBSERVE

As you just read in Colossians, all things—both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—were created through Jesus Christ.

What were they created out of? Did anything exist before creation that God used to create all He created?

***Leader:** Read Psalm 90:1–2 and Hebrews 11:1–3, 6 aloud. Have the group do the following:*

- Mark every reference to **God**, including pronouns, with a triangle.
- Draw a box around the words **born, give birth to, prepared, made**.
- Mark the word **faith** with an **F**.

DISCUSS

- What did you learn about God from Psalm 90? This is important so don't miss a detail.

- What did you learn from marking born, birth, prepared, made in these two passages?
- So what was creation made from? What did God use? How did He create everything He made?
- Who was present at creation?
- What existed before creation?
- How do you know all this?
- Describe what the text tells you about faith and explain how that applies to your understanding of the world.

made out of things which are visible....

⁶ And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

- Who are you going to believe if someone tells you anything else?

INSIGHT

If God created the world out of nothing, then He is *self-existent*, *self-sufficient*. To put it another way, God is *self-contained*; there is nothing He needs apart from Himself. In Exodus 3:4 God tells Moses His name is I AM—YHWH (Yahweh, or Jehovah). It comes from the word which means to exist or be. In Him is everything and anything we will ever need! And if “from everlasting to everlasting” He is God (Psalm 90:2), then He is *eternal*.

Romans 8:36 tells us “For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.”

Your Creator is the self-existent, self-sufficient, eternal God.

OBSERVE

As you study the Bible, you will be amazed at how often mankind is reminded that the eternal God is the creator. This truth was emphasized by the apostles as they proclaimed the Gospel, so that people might understand that God created us for His purpose (Acts 4:23–31).

Let's wrap up our study by going to the last book of the Bible, Revelation.

OBSERVE

Leader: Read Revelation 4:2, 9–11 and have the group...

- *mark with a triangle every reference to **God**, including pronouns and synonyms, such as **the One**.*
- *underline each mention of **the throne**.*

DISCUSS

- What did you learn from marking the references to God?

REVELATION 4:2, 9–11

² Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne....

⁹ And when the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever,

¹⁰ the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

¹¹ “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”

- According to verse 11, why do you exist?
- Do you believe God is the creator? Why or why not?
- Do you think God is really worthy to receive glory and honor and power? Why?

OBSERVE

Let's look at one last passage that ties in with what you just saw in Revelation 4. It is a description of what happens when Jesus, the Lamb of God, appears before the throne of God and all the heavenly host surrounding the throne. Verse 9 describes the Lamb as "standing, as if slain," so this occurs after Jesus' death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven.

Leader: Read Revelation 5:11–13 and have the group mark...

- every reference to **the Lamb** with a cross.
- the reference to **God**, described here as **Him who sits on the throne**, with a triangle.

DISCUSS

- What did you learn from marking the references to the Lamb?

REVELATION 5:11–13

¹¹ Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands,

¹² saying with a loud voice, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing."

¹³ And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, "To Him who sits on the

throne, and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.”

- What did you learn from marking the reference to God?

- If you truly believe God and Jesus Christ, the Lamb, are to have dominion (supreme authority to rule) forever and ever, how will that affect your life?

- How would that look, practically speaking, in your day-to-day life?

... in the way you spend your time,
your money?

... in the way you dress, talk,
behave, treat others, do your job?

... in what you watch, read, do?

WRAP IT UP

As you read through the Word of God, you will find God Himself reminding His people time and time again that He is the Creator of the heavens and the earth. Because of that, as Jeremiah says, “Nothing is too difficult” for Him (32:17, 27). Our self-existent, self-sufficient Creator needs nothing from us—and since we were created for His purposes, our role is to submit to Him, giving Him glory and honor in every aspect of our lives.

When Job endured unmerited suffering, he received all sorts of confusing explanations from his friends. Job himself questioned why a righteous, God-fearing man like him should be subject to such misery. Finally the Lord answered Job out of the whirlwind,

Who is this that darkens counsel

By words without knowledge?

Now gird up your loins like a man,

And I will ask you, and you instruct Me!

Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth?

Tell Me, if you have understanding. (Job 38:2–4)

For two chapters God bombarded Job with questions while giving breath-taking explanations of His creation. Finally, overwhelmed by truth, Job responded,

Behold, I am insignificant; what can I reply to You?

I lay my hand on my mouth.

Once I have spoken, and I will not answer;

Even twice, and I will add nothing more. (Job 40:4–5)

Job became putty in the hands of the Divine Potter, willing to be shaped in any way God desired.

Such surrender will mark our attitude as well, once we truly know our God.

Why don't you, as a group, take time to worship your Creator, the everlasting God. To worship is to look at someone's worth, to bow before Him, to rehearse who He is, tell Him He is Worthy, and submit all to Him.

And really, what other response can we have, knowing that we exist because of Him...and for Him?



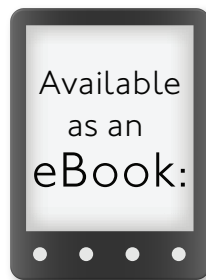
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