

**BIBLE
STUDIES
FOR LIFE®**

Advanced Bible Study

TEACHER GUIDE | WINTER 2022-23 | CSB

STUDY 1:

*Putting Fear
in Its Place*

STUDY 2:

*How to Discern
the Voice of God*



LEADING SOMEONE TO THE GREATEST DECISION OF ALL

One of the great joys of leading a group in Bible study is seeing group members deepen their walk with Christ. Everyone's walk with Christ begins with an initial decision to follow Him in repentance and faith. People may be in your group who have not made that decision yet. Take advantage of your time with them to talk about becoming a Christian.

As you tell your own story about coming to Christ, share these key truths:

1. We are all sinners, and each of us needs to acknowledge that truth before God. That acknowledgement involves repentance, which is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Refer to Romans 3:23, 6:23, and Acts 3:19.
2. The only way a person can receive the gift of forgiveness is by faith in Jesus as God's Son. Use verses like Acts 4:12, Ephesians 2:8-9, and John 14:6 when talking about faith in Christ.
3. Confessing your faith in Jesus Christ means both believing in your heart and confessing with your mouth that He is Savior and Lord. Share Romans 10:9-10,13.

Invite the person to pray a prayer similar to this:

“Dear God, I know I am a sinner and have rebelled against You in many ways. I believe Jesus died for my sin and only through faith in His death and resurrection can I be forgiven. I now turn from my sin and ask Jesus to forgive me and to come into my life as my Savior and Lord. From this day forward, I will choose to follow Jesus. Thank You, Lord, for loving me and for forgiving me. In Jesus's name I pray, Amen.”

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DON'T MISS THIS!

EBOOK NOW AVAILABLE!!

Bible Studies for Life is also available as an eBook. You can order a copy at lifeway.com/bsflebook.



EXTRA!

Every week, you'll find additional discussion questions and creative teaching ideas to help you tailor each session to the needs of your group. You'll also find links to magazine articles and the *Family Connection* page for parents.

www.BibleStudiesforLife.com/AdultExtra

SOCIAL MEDIA



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We believe that the Bible has God for its author; salvation for its end; and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter and that all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy.

To review Lifeway's doctrinal guideline, please visit lifeway.com/doctrinalguideline.

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Advanced Bible Study Teacher Guide sometimes lists websites that may be helpful to our readers. Our staff verifies each site's usefulness and appropriateness prior to publication. However, website content changes quickly, so we encourage you to approach all websites with caution. Make sure sites are still appropriate before sharing them with participants, friends, and family.

HOW TO USE

WHAT'S INSIDE

Teaching Plan—Each session has a two-page teaching plan. Use it in accordance with Advanced Bible Study, utilizing the teaching outline to guide your class through the passage and its key emphases as detailed in the Advanced Bible Study commentary. Engage class members by leading a discussion of key points, asking questions, and inviting their insights.

Optional Idea—We learn in a variety of ways. This additional teaching idea will encourage your class members to use different senses, enhancing their learning and deepening their understanding.

Dig Deeper—This is an illustration or fact not readily drawn from the passage that can add depth and meaning as you teach.

PRAY

Because the Holy Spirit is the guide for your study, invite Him to show you how to “rightly divide the word of truth” as you teach your class. Read the Bible passage several times, asking the Holy Spirit to show you its meaning and application.

PREPARE YOUR CLASS MEMBERS

Encourage your class members to read Advanced Bible Study prior to class time. In addition, you may consult one of the following Personal Study Guides or commentaries:

- ▶ Herschel Hobbs Commentary
- ▶ Bible Studies for Life: Young Adult
- ▶ Bible Studies for Life: Adult
- ▶ Bible Studies for Life: Senior Adult
- ▶ Bible Studies for Life: KJV Adult
- ▶ Bible Studies for Life: Daily Discipleship Guide

Some class members may prefer to read their book after class as a way to follow up and reflect on what they have learned and discussed.

Introduction

PUTTING FEAR IN ITS PLACE

We live in uncertain times. Whether it's a pandemic, racial tensions, political divides, health issues, or concerns for family and friends, the uncertainty of how life will play out can cause an uneasy fear. The Bible has revealed to us that God is the all-powerful Sovereign over the universe. In other words, there is no one or nothing greater than Him. God is also gracious to us, and when we look to Him in trust, we can rest confidently in Him regardless of what our circumstances throw at us.

How This Study Supports the Discipleship Plan:

Exercise Faith. Fear can strike us in many ways, but we stand strong as we trust in the character of God. Our faith is to reside in who He is because God is greater than any of our fears.

WRITERS:

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SESSION 1

The Fear of God**THE POINT**

The fear of God gives us the foundation to face all other fears.

THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

Franklin Roosevelt famously said, “We have nothing to fear but fear itself.” That is not true. One fear is necessary: a fear of God. When we see God for who He is in all His greatness and power, we recognize His authority over us. In humble submission before Him, we fear Him and trust Him to take care of us.

PSALM 33:6-15,18-22

⁶ The heavens were made by the word of the LORD, and all the stars, by the breath of his mouth. ⁷ He gathers the water of the sea into a heap; he puts the depths into storehouses.

⁸ Let the whole earth fear the LORD; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. ⁹ For he spoke, and it came into being; he commanded, and it came into existence.

¹⁰ The LORD frustrates the counsel of the nations; he thwarts the plans of the peoples.

¹¹ The counsel of the LORD stands forever, the plans of his heart from generation to generation. ¹² Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD — the people he has chosen to be his own possession! ¹³ The LORD looks down from heaven; he observes everyone.

¹⁴ He gazes on all the inhabitants of the earth from his dwelling place. ¹⁵ He forms the hearts of them all; he considers all their works.

.....

¹⁸ But look, the LORD keeps his eye on those who fear him — those who depend on his faithful love ¹⁹ to rescue them from death and to keep them alive in famine. ²⁰ We wait for the LORD; he is our help and shield. ²¹ For our hearts rejoice in him because we trust in his holy name. ²² May your faithful love rest on us, LORD, for we put our hope in you.

Teaching Plan

GET INTO THE STUDY

OPENING QUESTION: *How does fear reveal our position in the world?*

- ▶ Our interactions with the extremes of nature give us a glimpse at our frailty and powerlessness.
- ▶ Display **Pack Item 1: Putting Fear in Its Place**. In Psalm 33, we see what it means to fear God.

STUDY THE BIBLE

PSALM 33:6-9

We fear God when we stand in awe of Him as Creator.

Without knowing how, ancient people who followed God understood who.

- ▶ Use “The Setting” (p. 8 in *Advanced Bible Study*) to point out the role of festivals and how Israel’s geological features led to their focus on God.
- ▶ Point to the power of God’s word in creation using the paragraphs that begin with “For the people . . .” (pp. 9-10 in *Advanced Bible Study*) to link other Scriptures to His creative force.
- ▶ Ask: What do you see about God in creation?

As we see God’s eternal qualities in creation, we respond with reverent fear.

- ▶ Use the two paragraphs that begin with “The reaction . . .” (p. 10 in *Advanced Bible Study*) to explain fearing God means awe and submission.
- ▶ Emphasize that for God’s children fear of Him is not terror but an understanding of His holiness.

We observe God’s eternal nature and power when we see Him as Creator.

- ▶ Referencing the three paragraphs that begin with “Again, verse 9 . . .” (p. 11 in *Advanced Bible Study*), explain how God spoke and caused things to be.

- ▶ Describe how God’s authority is rooted in His power; our respect is grounded in our trust of Him.
- ▶ How can God’s power and authority give us stability and security in our chaotic world?

PSALM 33:10-15

We fear God when we willingly surrender to His plans as Lord.

The Old Testament reinforces the ultimate failure of those who oppose God and the victory of His people.

- ▶ Point out that God’s purposes are unstoppable, even against human schemes.
- ▶ Using the paragraph that begins “We fear God . . .” (p. 12 in *Advanced Bible Study*), help students consider God’s eternal nature.

Those who are held, chosen, and possessed by God are happy.

- ▶ Refer to the two paragraphs that begin “Happy is the . . .” (p. 13 in *Advanced Bible Study*) to help students see that we, too, are God’s chosen inheritance through Jesus.
- ▶ Does God feel distant today? How can this passage inspire you to draw near to God?

God sees and knows each person individually and thoroughly.

- ▶ Use the three paragraphs beginning “Fearing God . . .” (pp. 13-14 in *Advanced Bible Study*) to point out that God is actively aware of what is happening in all people.
- ▶ Consider how God formed our hearts; how is our faith revealed in our response to that statement?

PSALM 33:18-22

We fear God when we depend on Him as our Shield and Provider.

There is unique security found in fearing God.

- Use the two paragraphs beginning "We Fear God . . ." (pp. 15-16 in Advanced Bible Study) to explain that life was hard for the Israelites; yet, those who trusted in God knew they were seen.
Explain how God's protection transcended military threats and daily struggles; it was unimaginably powerful and yet grounded in love.
How can we be aware of God's watchfulness both in the daily and the life-altering struggles?

We respond to God with solemn commitment.

- Use the paragraph beginning "As a conclusion . . ." (pp. 16-17 in Advanced Bible Study) to show God displays His love and calls us to commit to Him.
Help students see when we wait for God, we prove our trust in Him. Pass out Pack Item 2: Fear of God handout and discuss Old Testament examples of when fear of God led to obedience.

We respond to God with rejoicing.

- Use the three paragraphs that begin with "The resounding cry . . ." (p. 17 in Advanced Bible Study) to show we find joy as we fear God.
Remind students that responding to God requires action: placing our hope in Him with faithful trust.

See OPTIONAL IDEA on page 10 for a creative way to discuss the fear of God.

LIVE IT OUT

- How is Psalm 33 applicable to our daily faith today?
How are fear and trust connected in this study?
How will you respond with awe and joy this week after today's study?

Share the story from DIG DEEPER on the next page.

My Teaching Notes

Lined writing area for teaching notes.

Pack Item 01

Putting Fear in Its Place
THE FEAR OF GOD
Psalm 33:6-15, 18-22
SECURITY IN PLACE OF FEAR
Romans 8:28-39
LOVE IN PLACE OF FEAR
1 John 3:13-18; 4:14-18
SUBMISSION TO GOD IN PLACE OF FEAR
Luke 1:26-38
COURAGE IN PLACE OF FEAR
Matthew 14:22-33
JOY IN PLACE OF FEAR
Zephaniah 3:9-20

Pack Item 02

FEAR OF GOD
In the Bible, fear is never often regarded nor as pure emotion for its own behavior. The proper attitude of believers toward God is often said to be respect, reverence, or awe, rather than fear.
Character Action Reference
Noah Built an ark as God commanded him Genesis 6:17-22
Abraham Willing to sacrifice his son Genesis 22:1-12
Joseph Refused to sleep with Potiphar's wife Genesis 39:1-23
Moses Yielded the call to lead the Israelites out of Egypt Exodus 4:1-7
Deborah Called as a military leader Judges 4:1-13
Gideon Embraced Israel from Midian Judges 6:11-23
David Refused to kill Saul when he had the opportunity 1 Samuel 24:10-16
Nehemiah Faced terror with the king to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem Nehemiah 2:1-8
Jehoiachin Refused to curse God 2 Kings 23:1-5
Daniel Refused to eat the king's food Daniel 1:8-16

Optional Idea

Bring to class any items you might use to keep from having sun damage: sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat, sunscreen, UV-protection shirt, and more.

Say: “The sun is wonderful; it gives us light, warmth, and energy. It enables plants to grow.” Ask students to consider things they enjoy doing outside in the sun: gardening, swimming, and more. You may even walk students through different seasons, talking about the role the sun plays: in the summer, the long days give us time outside, energy for plants, and pleasant time at the beach. In the winter, we have shorter days but the sun is a wonderful respite from the cold. Engage students in discussing the benefits of Vitamin D from being in the sunshine and the emotional benefits of soaking in the sun’s rays.

Display the items you brought to class. Say: “But we also know that the sun is powerful. If anyone has ever had skin cancer due to sun exposure, you know what I’m talking about. The same goes for sun burn;

we must be aware of the power of the sun and respect its effects on our lives.”

Say: “We understand the sun; we can appreciate its blessings as we respect its power.” Explain, in the same way, we can appreciate the blessings of God and respect His power as well. This is what the fear of God looks like.



Dig Deeper

Godly fear and faith are akin to one another, so it would be a mistake to speak of one and not the other. In fact, if one’s fear is not eventually accompanied by faith, then it is of a type universally prohibited in God’s Word. The Bible contains approximately 190 “fear not” commands, and in nearly every instance a lack of faith in God is the root problem. Jesus commands His disciples, “Don’t let your heart be troubled or fearful” (John 14:27). Instead, “Believe in God; believe also in me” (v. 1).

Faith in God is not just the remedy for fear; by God’s grace, faith is often the result. This week’s focal passage (particularly Ps. 33:7) may remind the reader of Exodus 14–15 and one of the most celebrated

miracles in Israel’s history. By parting the Red Sea, God demonstrated His sovereign rule over the elements of creation, using it to rescue His covenant people and to judge their enemies. The Israelites would later sing, “The water heaped up at the blast from your nostrils,” and when “the enemy said: ‘I will pursue,’ . . . you blew with your breath, and the sea covered them” (Ex. 15:8-10). God’s people observed His power, and their fears were suddenly transformed into faith. When Israel saw the Egyptian army approaching, they were terrified and faithless, but “when Israel saw the great power that the LORD used against the Egyptians, the people feared the LORD and believed in him” (14:31).