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Part Two of the  
Journey with God Bible Study Series:

# Trusting in the Father's Heart

by Tammy Feil

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ISBN 978-1-105-95261-6

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Printed in the United States of America.

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**(Weeks I-II are found in Part One, "Discovering the Father's Heart".)**

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*Also by Tammy Feil*

***Journey with God Bible Study Series:***

Part One - Discovering the Father's Heart

(Ten week study)

Part Two - Trusting in the Father's Heart

(Eleven week study)

Part Three - Resting in the Father's Heart

(Six week study)

*(All accompanying messages are available at [www.journeybiblestudy.com](http://www.journeybiblestudy.com).)*

**Coming in September of 2012:**

***Journey with Jesus Bible Study Series***

With special thanks to **Susie Kennedy** for her dauntless work in editing, coaching, and praying for me. You are a treasured forever friend! Thanks also to **Amy Rostance**, whose creative genius brought the live Bible study experience into vivid color through her skillful PowerPoint presentations. Your steady friendship has nourished my heart!

Thanks to **Kris Stewart**, whose airplane ride and women's ministry leadership was the doorway through which God birthed this Bible study vision. I am so grateful for you, Kris, and your courage to obey! With a debt of gratitude to **Pastor Joe Still**, whose leadership, partnership, and friendship provided a safe place for this study to blossom. When you said, "I want to help you," everything turned for me, so I am joyfully grateful for you. I would also like to thank **Pastor Curt Bradford**, whose courageous leadership provided a rich environment for God to tend to all my broken places— spirit, heart, mind, and body. Thank you also for the unwavering support and encouragement you have given to my husband, Terry.

A special word of thanks to the visionary leadership of **Joyce Bradford** and **Dr. Debbi Dunlap**. They saw what I could not see, and gave me the opportunities and the foundation to grow these gifts. Joyce, you were the first to see and this is the fruit of your vision. Debbi, your strong encouragement and loving mother's heart have healed deep places in my soul. Thank you! And for the **countless others** who have contributed to my life, prayed for us, encouraged us, loved on us, and took a chance on us, THANK YOU! **No human life stands separate from all who have impacted it.**

To my wonderful boys, **Jake** and **Ben**, thank you for the sacrifices you made as God brought this vision to life. And finally, to my husband, **Terry**, whose unconditional love and acceptance gave me the first glimpse of God's powerful love, THANK YOU! You love generously and sacrificially, and I am grateful that you are a mighty man of God!

# Introduction

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**Welcome!** I am so glad that you have taken time out of your busy life to sit at Jesus' feet! Our God is so pleased when we spend focused time with Him. He has many beautiful surprises just waiting for us to discover as we walk with Him. Your Heavenly Father wants you to see Him in the *little* things as well as the *big things*, in the **ordinary** as well as the **extraordinary**, and in the **triumphs** as well as the **challenges**. *When you are willing to look for God every day, you will begin to find Him in the most amazing places!*

**God wants you to see Him more clearly than you ever have.** Not only does He want you to recognize His activity, He also wants you to be aware of the schemes of the enemy. We have spent our lives struggling with our sin nature, and the steady barrage of hostile whispers from the enemy. These thought patterns are so familiar to us that we scarcely notice their ceaseless drone. The enemy cunningly convinces us that our negative and harassing thoughts are our own. Most of us believe that we are in a civil war within ourselves; we are our own worst enemy.

**This is not the truth, however.** While we all have faulty thinking patterns, you are not your own worst enemy. You have a very real, and very clever enemy, who wants to destroy you. His goal is to keep you so busy struggling with anxiety, shame, and self-loathing that you never realize that he is the one who is actually firing many of those fiery darts. As long as you think you are simply fighting yourself, you'll never find the confidence and courage to stand against your real enemy. As long as he can keep you deceived, he wins.

**Part Two of the Journey with God Bible Study Series** goes to the heart of this common human experience. We will study the Scriptures to better hear God's truth. We will explore the various forms of attack that the Scriptures describe, and we will learn how to recognize the true source of our struggles. While all of us need to be retrained in our thinking patterns, the Holy Spirit is fully capable and willing to do this. We simply need to saturate ourselves in the truth of God's Word so that we can recognize the truth about our struggles.

This study is designed to help you think differently *with God and about God*. It is formatted to help you read Scripture with new eyes, and then reflect on its meaning in your life. God is telling a profoundly beautiful story about Himself through His Word and He wants you to catch sight of it. The first day of each week's study is called "In My Father's Lap," and reflects on passages that reveal God's heart for His people. Some of what He says there was written to a specific group of people for a very specific time. Days Two and Four of each week's study are called "At the Teacher's Feet." On these days, we will look at stories from the Bible that help us understand the "big picture" of God's relationship with mankind. On day three of each week, we will spend time together, "Just Between You and Me." The emphasis of this day will be to more thoroughly understand the key themes we are studying. And finally, on day five, we will reflect on one of the Psalms, in our "What He's Singing Over Me" segment. At all times, our goal will be to better recognize how God is guiding and teaching us, so that we can better respond to His leading.

In John 10:10, Jesus says, *"The thief comes only in order to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have and enjoy life, and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)."* (Amplified Bible) In addition to the same format of Parts One and Three, Part Two adds a parabolic story to better illustrate the unseen but thoroughly experienced realities of the spirit realm. Its story is a metaphor for life, a shadow cast in the unseen spiritual realm. It gives name to our experiences, and it beautifully describes the gradual transformation of a child of God. Remember, it is a metaphor, an illustration, to help us better understand what we cannot see. I hope you will find pieces of your own story there. Stay the course, Sweet Sister. It is well worth the work!

Blessings and Joyful Journeying!

Tammy Feil

# Trusting in the Father's Heart

## Journey with God Bible Study Series Part 2

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Each day will begin with an opportunity to reflect on the previous day's events. God's agenda for your life doesn't change when the calendar does. ***As you reflect, feel free to record anything at all that comes to mind.*** This reflection is between you and God; you will never be asked to share anything of a personal nature with others. It may be a feeling, a thought, an insecurity, a doubt, a concern, a triumph, or a challenge... anything at all. Anything that meant something to you, for good or for ill, can be recorded here. You'll also learn to lay these before your Father in a more conscious fashion and see if any new insights emerge from your thinking it over with Him. God speaks from within the framework of your heart and mind, so be listening to anything that surprises you or sheds insight on the issue. Any thought that diminishes you (condemns or discourages) is NOT your Father, but the enemy. We will learn much more in the weeks ahead about better recognizing the Spirit versus the enemy, but for now you can know this: ***the Spirit's guidance brings light and life (it opens your understanding, sheds light, leaves you feeling opened up).*** Even when the Spirit convicts, it brings a sense of relief for a believer who truly desires a fullness of life with God. Openly dialogue with God, to the best of your present ability and be as real with Him as you feel you can be.



Each day we will be building our time alone with God around a Biblical text. This symbol reminds you to have your Bible handy as you'll be using it to hear God's Word for you that day. I hope you'll soon discover ***it is the most wonderful and passionate love letter ever written – and it is for you!***



This symbol represents anytime God's Word is especially intimate. This denotes God's loving heart towards you, His precious and beloved daughter. He knows your flaws, weaknesses and failures better than even you – so no fears! ***His love for you is not contingent upon your performance.*** Only the demonstration of His blessings and sweetly demonstrated goodness towards you will be intertwined with your ongoing surrendered. But we'll be getting to all of that...



Vital to your personal growth with God is your own personal application of His Word. If you do not take it into yourself and nourish your heart, mind and spirit with it, it won't bear fruit in your life. While God says that His Word never returns void, He also speaks at great length about our responsibility to invest that Word wisely. As we will see, the illustration of taking the valuable Word you're given and properly holding onto it is the key to abundant growth with God. These questions will be designed to move you out of generalizations ***and to receive this beautiful Word into your own self.*** It isn't just true for most of His daughters, ***it is true for you.*** But it remains outside of you until you begin (even hesitantly at first) to receive it as a direct Word for you. Give this area plenty of attention and don't breeze through; this is where your empty places will begin to be filled.



At the end of each day's work, you'll be asked to write out whatever made the most impression upon you that day. You are asked to view this as God's very special gift to you for the day. ***Let your heart lead the way*** on this question, even if it feels almost silly to feel that way. There are pieces and parts of you from all the years of your life and many times, especially if we have been very broken, His Word will touch on a place all the way back to girlhood. No need to feel embarrassed about this; as you will soon discover, God is busily mending those torn places in your soul. Give Him free access and you'll be amazed at the result!

# Introduction

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**"This Week's Theme: \_\_\_\_\_"** will be the next stop in our day's work. This is where you are to take the week's theme (which is on the week's cover page and at the top of every page in your study) and personalize it. Week One's theme is: "You Matter to God." Each day in week one when you come to this part, you will write, "I matter to God." Each week's theme will start with hints on how to personalize it. It's important that you see the theme as a statement TO you: "YOU matter to God", but ***it's equally important that you begin to believe it FOR yourself.*** You'll do this as you write it out first person.



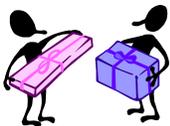
Lastly in our day's study, you will find a "Take-Away" for you. It will be a brief summary of an important part of that day's work. It would be very meaningful if you could write this on a little card and keep it with you. ***The more times you see it and even say it to yourself, the more it will become your own understanding.*** Even consider posting it as your status!



On day three of each week's study, I will be doing a greater portion of teaching. It is called "Just Between You and Me" and will most likely include a small portion of Scripture. This symbol just denotes that this is teaching commentary to help you along your journey. This icon is a beautiful symbol of how your mind's study and your heart's understanding combine to create beautiful growth within. Bask in your Father's love in a different way on this day, ***from Sister to Sister.***



This symbol is a key to learning that needs to happen ***outside of class*** as an extra assignment. It will appear occasionally when you need to follow up with another daughter of God as you process His work in your life.



Gathering together with other believers and sharing with one another is vital for a flourishing relationship with God. Even in our study of Adam and Eve we see the dynamic that humans need other humans. At the end of day five, you will be asked to spend a few minutes looking back over your week's entries. As you think back on all that has happened that week, you will want to look for God's fingerprints, whispers, and guidance. You will be asked to prayerfully consider how you can share this with someone that week. God may use what you say to unlock another sister's understanding of what God is doing in her own life. It might feel awkward to you, but it's amazing what God will do with a willing spirit. ***He has plans to use you as He loves on your sisters.***



Beginning in week 13, you will be asked to name the ***negative thoughts or feelings*** that have been bothering you. This exercise is designed to help you better identify the faulty thinking patterns you may have adopted, and the sneaky lies the enemy constantly feeds you. The enemy's sneaky insinuations and harassing thoughts usually land in our soft areas, areas where God's truth has not yet shored us up in strength and confidence.

Find each week's MP3 teaching message online at [www.journeybiblestudy.com](http://www.journeybiblestudy.com).

# Trusting in the Father's Heart

Journey with God Bible Study Series Part 2

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# Familiar With What We Know

Find the MP3 message for Week 12 at [www.journeybiblestudy.com](http://www.journeybiblestudy.com).

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Study Text: Isaiah 36:1-2, 4-10, 14-end; Isaiah 37

## In What Are You Trusting?

1. I am \_\_\_\_\_ with the \_\_\_\_\_.

- "Your \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_ compared to mine..." (Isaiah 36:5-6, 8-9)
- "Your God is \_\_\_\_\_ with you..." (Isaiah 36:7, 10)
- "No one else \_\_\_\_\_ you..." (Isaiah 36:14-15)
- "I'm willing to \_\_\_\_\_ with you..." (Isaiah 36:16-17)
- "Look at my record of \_\_\_\_\_ and God doesn't stop me..."  
(Isaiah 36:18-20)

2. God's Response to the enemy:

- "You only do \_\_\_\_\_ you to do..." (Isaiah 37:26-27)
- "You \_\_\_\_\_..." (Isaiah 37:28-29)

# Trusting in the Father's Heart

## Journey with God Bible Study Series Part 2

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### 3. Why Did God Respond This Way?

❖ God's \_\_\_\_\_ to His people (Isaiah 37:32)

- My God is \_\_\_\_\_ to me!

❖ God's \_\_\_\_\_ is at \_\_\_\_\_ in the lives of His people (Isaiah 37:35)

- My God's \_\_\_\_\_ is at \_\_\_\_\_!

### 4. One final reason that God responded as He did...

- "Because \_\_\_\_\_"

Your \_\_\_\_\_ to trouble is the \_\_\_\_\_ upon which

your \_\_\_\_\_ or your \_\_\_\_\_ swings upon.

Through prayer-filled faith, we \_\_\_\_\_ to lay hold

of what God has \_\_\_\_\_ to us.

"They cried out to God during the battle, and He answered their prayer because they trusted in Him." 1 Chronicles 5:20 (NLT)

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Week Twelve:

## Familiar With What We Know

“The Lord is my strength, my shield from every danger.

I trust in Him with all my heart.

He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy.

I burst out in songs of thanksgiving.”

~ Psalms 28:7 (NLT)

# Trusting in the Father's Heart

## Journey with God Bible Study Series Part 2

### Day One: In My Father's Lap

God is deeply involved in your daily life and His desire is that you would recognize His activity and come to know Him more intimately. We develop relationships by talking and spending time together. You grow more deeply connected to God in the same way. **Each morning, take time to focus your thoughts on God. Talk to Him throughout the entire course of your day. Learn to include Him in everything.**



***With that thought, He asks you today...*** What kind of day did you have (yesterday or today)? What's been going on in your heart and mind? \_\_\_\_\_

In light of what is happening and how you are feeling, what specific request would you now ask of Him? In what way would you ask Him to move? \_\_\_\_\_

Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... ***Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.*** Open your Bible and read Isaiah 46:3-4 slowly. Stop anywhere you find yourself struck by something you've read. ***Record your thoughts here:***



Now read it in this translation (NLT) and insert your name into the blanks. Spend time with it; listen to what is going on inside of you. ***In the lines just under each statement, write your thoughts and feelings as you absorb this truth for yourself.***

Isaiah 46:3-4: "Listen to Me, all you who remain... I have cared for you since you were born. Yes, I carried you before you were born. I will be your God throughout your lifetime— until your hair is white with age. I made you, and I will care for you. I will carry you along and save you."

(Vs. 3a) "Listen to Me, (\_\_\_\_\_)... I have cared for you since you were born."

***God has been taking care of you since you were born.*** Let that soak in deeply. Even when you felt completely isolated from love, from peace, from joy, and from God, He was right there with you. Not only was He with you, but He was tenderly caring for you.

James 1:17 (NIV) says, *"Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows."*

This is a verse we should take very much to heart. ***Every good thing that has come into your life has come from your Heavenly Father. As you look back over the years of your life, in what ways can you see of God's tender care for you?***

# Familiar With What We Know

## Week Twelve

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(Vs. 3b) "Yes, ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), I carried you before you were born."

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**Your God was carrying you before you were ever born.** Can you feel the security of His arms? Can you feel their strength as they hold you tightly to His chest? Can you feel His heart beating; the steady rhythm a constant reminder that His heart is filled with love for you?

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(Vs. 4a) "( \_\_\_\_\_ ), I will be your God throughout your lifetime— until your hair is white with age."

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**It is God's desire to be with His children; to be with you, throughout your lifetime.** He was with you before you knew Him. He has been with you every time you have failed to let Jesus Christ be the Lord of your life. He will be with you in every day to come, even as age dims your thoughts and understanding. *Sweet Sister, your God is with you!*

(Vs. 4b) "I made you, ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), and I will care for you."

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**You are the marvelous product of God's own creativity!** Before you were ever born, God dreamed of you and chose for you to become a reality. God saw every mistake you would make and every time you would fail. He knew every heartache before it overtook you and He knew every time you would stand in triumph. Your God made you and will continue to tenderly care for you. These truths are worth shouting about! *How does your heart respond to these truths?* \_\_\_\_\_

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(Vs. 4b) "I will carry you along, ( \_\_\_\_\_ ), and save you."

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As we prepare to study the work the enemy has wrought in our lives, we will need to be able to draw back on these verses for the constant reminder that our God is with us and is caring for us. At times, our God is carrying us. He is always the One who rescues us! Thankfully, God's work of grace not only saves us from our sins and an eternity of separation from Him; His work also continues to restore us from all the work of the enemy against our lives!

**Look at the Bible translations you have and be sure to highlight this verse in your Bible.** Long after you've closed the cover on this study, you will want to easily locate these verses and be reassured of God's commitment to you when the days are dark and difficult. **Choose the translation which most resonates with you. Write that translation's version of Isaiah 46:3-4 on a small index card.** Don't hesitate to write it with your name plugged into the various phrases. **It is God's Word to you personally,** as well as to His other children. Write it carefully; write it beautifully; and then keep it out where you can regularly see it.



**With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.**

**God's special gift to me:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Take-Away: My God is with me and will tenderly care for me throughout every single day of my life.**

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# Trusting in the Father's Heart

## Journey with God Bible Study Series Part 2

### Day Two: At the Teacher's Feet

God is deeply involved in your daily life and His desire is that you would recognize His activity and come to know Him more intimately. We develop relationships by talking and spending time together. You will come to know God better in the same way. So today, and every day, take time to focus your thoughts on God. Talk to Him throughout the entire course of your day. Learn to include Him in everything.



With that thought, He asks you today...

**What kind of day did you have (yesterday or today)? What's been going on in your heart and mind?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**In light of what is happening and how you are feeling, what specific request would you now ask of Him? In what way would you ask Him to move?**

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**Lay all these things at His feet...** quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.* As you reflect on this story, listen to it from God's perspective. Listen as if He is right there telling you the story face-to-face and listen as if you are hearing it for the very first time. **Please read Exodus 1.**



As we concluded our tenth week of study, Abraham and Sarah had just been given the promise that their son would be born within one year. Isaac was born just as God had foretold. Three generations of Abraham's family are described in Genesis 21-50. Each generation had their own dramatic story, and a short review of the entire story can be found in Acts 7:2-19. This is well worth a read-through. To follow where God is leading in this unit, we must move past their stories. Abraham's great-grandson, Joseph lived more than four hundred years before today's story unfolds. God's plan for Joseph's life included suffering and captivity, but this experience forged a character in Joseph that God wanted to use. Joseph's captivity positioned him exactly where God wanted him. It was Joseph's depth of character and willingness to be used by God that inevitably fulfilled promises that God had made directly to Abraham many years before (see Genesis 15:13-16).



It was God's own plan to send Abraham's descendents (now called Israelites) into Egypt (see Genesis 46:1-4). God sovereignly chose to plant them in a foreign land. This plan would eventually lead them from a life of prosperity (in Joseph's time) to a time of captivity and slavery.

**Look at Exodus 1:11-14. God includes some very descriptive language about the Israelites' daily living conditions. How is their experience described?**

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The NIV translation uses phrases like "forced labor...worked them ruthlessly...made their lives bitter". Can you identify with these descriptions? *Have you ever felt helplessly trapped as you suffered through a very painful time? ...ruthlessly used? ...experienced bitter circumstances? Have you ever felt hopeless that a certain situation could ever be better?*

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# Familiar With What We Know

## Week Twelve

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The New Testament is full of teachings that shed light on the message God was illustrating in the Old Testament. These Old Testament pictures take on new dimensions altogether when we view them through the spiritual illumination of the New Covenant through Christ.

**Like the Israelites we are studying, we are born into a foreign land as slaves.**

**Galatians 4:3-5 (NLT):**

"And that's the way it was with us before Christ came. We were slaves to the spiritual powers of this world. (4) But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. (5) God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children."

**We are also born into a humanity that is bound to Sin. You were born into Sin.**

**Romans 5:12 (NLT):**

"When Adam sinned, sin entered the entire human race. Adam's sin brought death, so death spread to everyone, for everyone sinned."

**Romans 7:14,25 (NLT):**

"... I am sold into slavery, with sin as my master. (25) ... So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God's law, but because of my sinful nature I am a slave to sin."

"I am sold into \_\_\_\_\_, with \_\_\_\_\_ as my master... because of my sinful nature I am a \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_."

**Praise God this is not the end of the story... it is only the beginning of our story!** It is a very important beginning, however, and one we must understand if we are to cooperate fully with God's plan to free us. Salvation frees us from the *penalty* of our sin before God, but it is our obedience (our following, our cooperation) that frees us from the *control* of sin.

**Romans 5:15-19 (NLT) is below.** We want to break this down so we can understand it. As you read each verse, separate the effects of Adam's sin from the effects of Jesus' work on the cross. I have the differences highlighted for you.

"And what a difference between our sin and God's generous gift of forgiveness. For this one man, Adam, **brought death to many** through his sin. But this other man, Jesus Christ, brought **forgiveness to many** through God's bountiful gift.

(16) And the result of God's gracious gift is very different from the result of that one man's sin. For Adam's sin **led to condemnation**, but we have the **free gift of being accepted by God**, even though we are guilty of many sins.

(17) The sin of this one man, Adam, **caused death to rule over us**, but all who receive God's wonderful, gracious gift of righteousness **will live in triumph over sin and death** through this one man, Jesus Christ.

(18) Yes, Adam's one sin **brought condemnation upon everyone**, but Christ's one act of righteousness **makes all people right in God's sight and gives them life**.

(19) Because one person disobeyed God, **many people became sinners**. But because one other person obeyed God, **many people will be made right in God's sight**."

# Trusting in the Father's Heart

## Journey with God Bible Study Series Part 2

### Adam's Sin

### Jesus' work on the cross

(Vs. 15) brought death to many

brought forgiveness to many

(Vs. 16) led to condemnation

free gift of being accepted by God

(Vs. 17) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Vs. 18) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

(Vs. 19) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Our natural self (without God) is represented by the column describing Adam's sin. Through Christ's work alone, we are brought into new life with a new spiritual nature, as represented by the column describing Jesus' work on the cross.

**Please look at Romans 5:21 (NLT):**

*"So just as sin ruled over all people and brought them to death, **now God's wonderful kindness rules instead, giving us right standing with God and resulting in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**"*

**Please copy verse 21 here, and personalize it for yourself:**

"So just as sin ruled over \_\_\_\_\_ and brought \_\_\_\_\_ to death, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_."



Like the Israelites we are studying, our story will not end with captivity and slavery unless we resist God's plan of rescue and redemption. God has taken the whole payment upon Himself. God accomplished what we were powerless to do for ourselves. ***As believers in Jesus Christ, we have right standing with God.***

**Living in that freedom**, however, is fully contingent upon our willingness to leave the old life behind. We must follow the Holy Spirit through a land of growth and surrender, and then into a land of fulfillment and joy. The Holy Spirit will be illuminating the ways we choose our "self-life" over "God's life." The Spirit will help us realize that anytime we choose "self-life", we are bowing to our old master, Sin. Yet every time we choose "God's life", we will bring God's goodness into our own reality and experience.

As you already know, the transition to self-sacrifice is not easy and it will require effort and sacrifice on your part. But take heart! ***We have the Spirit of God Himself living within us and He has more than enough resources to accomplish this for us!*** Not only that, but the experience of living in the rhythm and flow of God's life will be better than you ever dreamed. Nothing here on earth compares. Let's let God teach us how to rely on the Spirit's strength and let go of anything that holds us back from the life God has for us. Onward to Freedom, Sweet Sister!

***How has God been speaking to you today and how will you respond?***

\_\_\_\_\_

***With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.***



***God's Special Gift to me.*** \_\_\_\_\_



***Take Away: I am God's beloved daughter and His wonderful kindness rules over me.***

# Familiar With What We Know

Week Twelve

## Day Three: Just Between You and Me

God is deeply involved in your daily life and His desire is that you would recognize His activity and come to know Him more intimately. We develop relationships by talking and spending time together. You will come to know God better in the same way. So today, and every day, take time to focus your thoughts on God. Talk to Him throughout the entire course of your day. Learn to include Him in everything.



With that thought, He asks you today...

**What kind of day did you have (yesterday or today)? What's been going on in your mind and heart?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**In light of what is happening and how you are feeling, what specific request would you now ask of Him? In what way would you ask Him to move?**

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**Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement. Day Three of each week's work will now include a story that will help illustrate what we are learning.** My prayer is that it may be of good use in our pursuit of God's freedom in our lives. **Now please read Part One on the next few pages. Ask the Holy Spirit to open the eyes of your heart and give you wisdom as you read. He will be faithful to guide your thoughts and understanding.**

### Familiar Land, Part One

Once there lived a very ordinary girl. She lived a very ordinary life in a very ordinary land named Familiar Land. As far as she could tell, her life was just as ordinary as every other person she knew. Everything in Familiar Land was quite, well, familiar. Everywhere she looked and everywhere she went, she saw things that seemed familiar. The language was familiar. The houses were familiar. The food was familiar. The people seemed familiar. It was only occasionally that she was introduced to something that seemed somehow, well, unfamiliar. Even so, she would soon discover that others were quite familiar with this thing. It was not long before she too, felt familiar with it.

The citizens of Familiar Land were created, and not born into families like we are. In many other respects though, they were very much like you or I. Each person in Familiar Land lived in their own house. It was issued to them upon their creation and no one could ever take their house from them. Each house was surrounded by a very tall, concrete wall. Each wall's thick blocks were stacked upon one another and allowed no sight of the house within its walls. There was a steel gate that allowed the owner to come and go. No one, however, was ever given access to another person's house.

This very ordinary girl lived in her very ordinary house in Familiar Land. There were no windows in her house and there was no light, but she did not really mind this as it was the only thing she had ever known. It was familiar to her; it was home. When she was created, she was named Possibilities. She was a very curious girl as she grew up in Familiar Land, and was constantly wondering "why?" and "how?" Possibilities liked to understand things. She never thought to wonder, however, about the lack of light and windows. It was, well, too familiar to question.

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Possibilities went to school with another very ordinary girl, Acceptance, who lived in another community nearby. Acceptance did not question everything the way that Possibilities did. Acceptance seemed fairly content with things as they came along and never wondered how or why. It actually annoyed Acceptance that Possibilities talked incessantly about things that were clearly not that puzzling. *"Why do you have to know why?"* Acceptance would ask. *"Why do you never wonder about things?"* answered Possibilities. Each girl would shake her head at the other but down deep in their hearts, they liked each other. They may not have been very much alike in the obvious ways, but each of them was just an ordinary girl, with a very ordinary life, in Familiar Land.

Like every other Younger Citizen, Possibilities was completely dependent upon Older Citizens for almost everything. Older Citizens were responsible to provide her meals. If she was especially fortunate, they also provided other items of comfort, including small fires that could light and warm her house. As long as Possibilities was surrounded by caring Older Citizens, her belly was filled and her skin was warmed. As long as they remembered her, she was kept healthy. For her first few years, Possibilities received regular deliveries of food, blankets, and coats. In her small fireplaces burned small, but important fires with which she warmed herself.

Possibilities' house, like every other house in Familiar Land, was built with two floors: an upstairs living space and a downstairs foundation floor. The upstairs was the place where Possibilities spent all her time when she was at home. Only occasionally did she venture down into the foundation floor, and then only when she had been given a small flashlight to light her way. She would descend the steep stairs carefully, for they creaked frighteningly under the weight of her feet. Under the stairs was a tiny room. There was no door to this room and she could never see inside of it. Whenever she got close to it, however, she felt bitterly cold and empty. Her belly would gnaw with hunger and her skin would crawl. *Something is not right in that room*, she would think silently to herself, and although she wondered about it, no one she knew ever talked about that room. *Perhaps I am the only one with such a frightening place in their house*, she decided. As she turned away from the strange room under the stairs, she cast her thin beam of light around the remainder of the basement. It was frightening, cold, damp, and empty.

Upstairs in Possibilities' living space, there were no rooms whatsoever. In fact, the only room in her house was the Room Under the Stairs. The living space was open and spacious; a place where she could dance, turn cartwheels, and sing to the top of her lungs. It was her place to hope and dream. Oh, what wonderful dreams she had! Possibilities had begun to fill the bookcases near the small fireplace with her favorite Treasures- dolls, stuffed animals, jewelry, hair ribbons, lacey socks, and her favorite purple velvet dress. Next to the book case stood her very own rocking chair. It was big enough just for her, but too small for any older person. In it, she would sit by the fire singing, dreaming, and rocking her baby dolls. With her tummy full and a warm fire to comfort her, she was quite content.

All Citizens in Familiar Land acquired Furnishings as they went about their days. If they had good alliances and friendly relations, they might acquire nice furnishings. These were pleasant comforts and made life more enjoyable. If they were very well connected, they might very well acquire very valuable pieces called Treasures. Citizens with Treasures considered themselves very rich indeed, for they did not harbor the emptiness that some of the other Citizens experienced. All Citizens acquired Furnishings as they learned, worked, and existed within the community. They accepted whatever Furnishings they acquired and considered them common to all. Because they were so easily and readily acquired, they were scarcely regarded as important or valuable.

No one in Familiar Land could hear or see very well. To help its Citizens be always in the flow of information, every person in Familiar Land was issued a set of ear buds. Through these ear buds, they were able to hear the world around them. As a matter of fact, Familiar Radio streamed a steady supply of Familiar music, Familiar commercials, and Familiar

# Familiar With What We Know

## Week Twelve

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messages through those ear buds. Possibilities had never lived for one single minute without the incessant noise of Familiar Radio. They were also issued eyeglasses, and these were upgraded as time went by. The older you were in Familiar Land, the darker your lenses became. No matter what these lenses looked like on the outside, Possibilities was assured, the darker the lenses, the better one could see.

As she grew older, however, things began to change. Some of the Older Citizens who had made regular deliveries to her house had to move to other parts of Familiar Land. They went on to care for others but were too far away to help her any more. Her deliveries of food, blankets, and coats became less frequent.

One day, Possibilities happened upon an important piece of information. Her good friend, Acceptance, was sucking on a piece of candy. *"How did you get that treat?"* Possibilities asked, for she had never seen candy before. (Until a Citizen in Familiar Land was of a certain age, their only food was nutritious fare, designed to make them stronger and healthier. It was only the lack of such nutrition that caused sickness in the Younger Citizens of Familiar Land. Once a Citizen was a little older, however, they could begin to sample Familiar Land's special treats.)

*"I received it for Pleasing an Older Citizen,"* Acceptance replied. Acceptance belonged to the Pleasant Community. They were generous, contented people who amply provided for Acceptance's needs. Acceptance had once told Possibilities that she had even been given a Sleeping Couch of Trust and a very bright light called the Lamp of Happiness. She always had a substantial fire in her house's fireplace, as evidenced by the continual stream of thick smoke billowing from her chimney. *"How might I learn to Please Older Citizens?"* inquired Possibilities.

"Pay attention to what makes them happy," suggested Acceptance. "Then do those things for them. Whenever a Familiar Citizen makes another Citizen happy, the Approval Candy appears quite miraculously."

So this is how Possibilities happened upon a plan to fill her belly. She learned to watch carefully and she learned to plan her strategy. Possibilities became quite good at pleasing others and over time it became just a normal part of who she was. As a matter of fact, Approval Candy was one of Familiar Land's greatest accomplishments. Approval Candy commercials steadily streamed through the Familiar Radio that Possibilities listened to all day, every day, now that she was old enough to enjoy the candy. For Possibilities did not yet know that each person in Familiar Land had some programming that was the same, and some that was designed especially for them. It would be quite a long time before Possibilities became aware of this fact.

The problem with pleasing was that the Approval Candy was deceptive. When a Citizen pleased another one, the hard, sweet Candy of Approval immediately appeared. Yet its sweetness, while thoroughly delightful in the first minutes, slowly changed into sourness and eventually bitter if sucked on for too long. Its initial flavor was so delightful, however, that one always forgot that it would turn sour and then bitter. Not only that, but one found themselves hungrier and emptier after sucking on it for a while. Possibilities never remembered this fact, however, and learned that the more frequently she conjured the Approval Candy, the sooner she could replace the fading sweetness with a new, fresher, piece of Candy.

Now Familiar Land was governed by King Familiar and all its Citizens were under his authority. Everything in Familiar Land bore King Familiar's mark. The Citizens behaved as they were taught by King Familiar's Ways. King Familiar had an endless supply of Officers who ran the country for him; teaching Familiar Ways and enforcing the Familiar Laws. Each time a Citizen failed to perform adequately, they were deemed guilty of a crime and the Familiar Officers glued an Ugly Patch on them. Unfortunately, Possibilities was a bit clumsy and awkward and had received a good many Ugly Patches.

Because of her social awkwardness, her uncertainty, and the Ugly Patches that now adorned her thin dress, the Officers informed Possibilities that King Familiar had issued a new

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## Journey with God Bible Study Series Part 2

name for her: "Unsure". Possibilities let this new edict settle over her. She pondered it as she slowly trudged home that afternoon. *After all, she reasoned, I really do not have any possibilities and I am so very unsure about every little thing. It is only right and true that this should be my new name.* And from that day on, little Possibilities became Unsure.

Did you relate to any part of today's story? If so, in what ways?

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*Did you gain any insight into your own experience with God? If so, how?*

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*Take-Away: I have been deeply impacted by the events of my life.*

## Day Four: At the Teacher's Feet

God is deeply involved in your daily life and His desire is that you would recognize His activity and come to know Him more intimately. We develop relationships by talking and spending time together. You will come to know God better in the same way. So today, and every day, take time to focus your thoughts on God. Talk to Him throughout the entire course of your day. Learn to include Him in everything.



With that thought, He asks you today...

What kind of day did you have (yesterday or today)? What's been going on in your heart and mind?

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In light of what is happening and how you are feeling, what specific request would you now ask of Him? In what way would you ask Him to move?

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Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.* As you reflect on this story, listen to it from God's perspective. Listen as if He is right there telling you the story face-to-face and listen as if you are hearing it for the very first time. **Please read Exodus 2.**



Today we arrive at the story of Moses. He will be a central figure in our studies during this unit of study. Make no mistake, Moses did not choose God's assignment for his life any more than we can choose our own assignments. Should we try to operate in our own strength, God will lovingly allow us to fall miserably short of our goal. Why? ***Because His plan for our life is***

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*far greater than our plan.* He designed us for specific and important assignments to further *His kingdom* here on earth. When we are operating within His will, we will be able to accomplish things far beyond our own abilities, for He will supernaturally equip and empower us. When we are operating in our own will and strength, we will have a major collision with our own character flaws and limitations. We will also live with intense frustration as our plans are thwarted. When we stand in heaven with our Father, we will know beyond a shadow of a doubt that His way was perfect and purposeful. ***The question is whether or not we will become convinced of this while we are still on this side of heaven! How would you describe Moses' experience according to Exodus 2?*** \_\_\_\_\_

As we have already discovered, the New Testament frequently sheds important light on the Old Testament stories. Shortly before the first Christian martyr would be stoned to death, he gave a divinely inspired message before the religious leaders. Listen to what Stephen tells us about Moses' life. ***Please read Acts 7:20-29 in your Bible.***

***Some important facts we can glean about Moses are:***

- (Vs. 20) He was no ordinary child.
- (Vs. 22) Moses was educated and was \_\_\_\_\_
- (Vs. 23) Moses was \_\_\_\_\_ years old when he killed the Egyptian
- (Vs. 25) Moses thought that the people would realize \_\_\_\_\_

Moses had not grown up in the culture and kinship of his own people, the Israelites. He had grown up in the culture and education of the Egyptians. Now, he had been forced to flee both and live in a foreign land and a foreign culture.

***Look again at Exodus 2:22 (NIV).*** "Moses named his son, Gershom, saying, \_\_\_\_\_."

As we discovered in day two of this week, we, too, are aliens in a foreign land. Our true home belongs with God Himself in God's Kingdom. ***Our hearts will rest as God's will reigns in our lives.*** While we will continue to live imperfect lives, still we can increasingly know God's rule and reign in the intimacy of our own heart, will, and mind. ***God's kingdom can increase in power and reality in your own life.***



We know that God's desire is for us to intimately relate to Him. He desires that His life would flow freely in our hearts and minds. He desires that we would know Him, recognize His activity, and remain consistently connected to His leadership. It is, you will remember, the Divine Cooperative Dance (week 4). ***Why, then, might God allow difficulties to take such a firm grasp on our lives?***

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\_\_\_\_\_  
***Is there any area of your life in which you feel caught and unable to change? Would you prayerfully name that to your God here. Pour out your heart about it to Him now.***



Read Exodus 2:23-25 again and then glance ahead at Exodus 3:7-9. ***What do you see of God's heart captured here in these verses?***

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In John 10:10 (NLT), Jesus says this:

"The thief's purpose is to steal and kill and destroy. My purpose is to give life in all its fullness."

**God desires to free you from the damaging effects of sin in your life.** This includes both the sins you have committed, and the sins others have committed against you. Both kinds leave a wake of destruction and "death" in your heart and mind.

**John 8:31 and 36 (NLT):**

"Jesus said to the people who believed in Him, 'You are truly my disciples if you keep obeying My teachings. And you will know the truth and the truth will set you free... So if the Son sets you free, you will indeed be free.'"

Sin tangles us up and keeps us from seeing, hearing, and responding to God's Truth. God has a plan to restore His freely flowing life to all those areas within us that are presently bound up and ruled by the damaging effects of sin. **Spend a few minutes now in prayer. Agree to give God access to all the areas of your heart, mind and will. Surrender your desire to "fix yourself" and instead, give God the freedom to do within you what He desires.**

**What is God saying to you today and how will you respond?**

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**With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write here as God's special gift to you and keep this thought before you.**



**God's special gift to me:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Take Away: God's kingdom can increase in power and reality in my life.**

## Day Five: What He's Singing Over Me

God is deeply involved in your daily life and His desire is that you would recognize His activity and come to know Him more intimately. We develop relationships by talking and spending time together. You will come to know God better in the same way. So today, and every day, take time to focus your thoughts on God. Talk to Him throughout the entire course of your day. Learn to include Him in everything.



With that thought, He asks you today...

**What kind of day did you have (yesterday or today)? What's been going on in your heart and mind?** \_\_\_\_\_

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**In light of what is happening and how you are feeling, what specific request would you now ask of Him? In what way would you ask Him to move?**

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# Familiar With What We Know

## Week Twelve

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Lay all these things at His feet... quiet your mind... trust Him... *Ask Him to let you see His activity and recognize His movement.*

This week we will begin to learn how to better meditate on God's Word. When we take the time to soak in it, it becomes a distinct part of us. When we truly take it into ourselves and believe it for ourselves, it becomes part of the way we think, act, and live.

Read this Psalm slowly and listen to how your heart responds as you read each phrase. *Do you resonate with its message? Do you find yourself resisting its message? Does it make your heart warm towards your God or does it make your heart uncomfortable?*



Ask the Holy Spirit to give you His wisdom and insight as you ponder these short phrases. *He will cast light on the phrases you are to soak in today. Today we will be reading Psalm 28:1-9.*

For example, as I have read over this passage today, my heart especially resonates with this cry:

### Psalm 28:7 (NLT)

"The Lord is my strength, my shield from every danger.  
I trust in Him with all my heart.  
He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy.  
I burst out in songs of thanksgiving."

This Scripture resonates with me because I depend on it every day of my life. If He is not my strength and my shield, I am helpless in this world. Even so, *it is a reminder to me to rely on His strength, and not my own; to stay firmly in His will so that I can hide behind His shield.* If I live without seeking His will, I will not remain safely behind His shield. If I choose to remain behind His shield and trouble still finds me, I can be assured of the next part: *"He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy."* His help does not always come immediately and it may require me to learn something new. Every trouble is able to teach me more about Him and to help me remove that which hinders His flow of life within me. This is the Divine Dance we discussed in Week Four. As the verse describes, my joy comes after His help, but I can rest in peace through my trust in Him. It is a comfort to know that *God will allow no learning opportunity to be wasted in my life (or pain to be purposeless) when I remain firmly attached to Him.*

Today He asks me to trust Him with the many unanswered questions that are weighing heavily upon my heart. I cannot answer the questions satisfactorily, as much as I would like to figure it all out. No, I am being reminded that *all I can do is lean into Him with intentional trust today.* I need His word to remind me of this every single day, for how easily does my natural self feel the crushing weight of these burdens? How easily does my natural self begin to feel hopeless when answers cannot be immediately found?

I need His constant reassurances that He is with me, He is my strength, He is my shield, and I can trust Him with my whole heart. I need Him to specifically remind me every single day *that He desires to help me,* has helped me in countless extraordinary ways before today, and can be counted on to help me in astonishing ways in the tomorrows that lie ahead. Just as my body needs fresh water throughout the day, *my soul needs the Living Water of a fresh word every single day.* Sometimes I need to turn my thoughts back to His promises many times a day, depending upon that day's troubles. *God's ever-flowing fountain gushes freely towards me; I must simply turn to it, step into it, and then soak in it until my heart has grown deliciously saturated and quiet in His truth. It is only then that I can go on about my day's assignment.*

Slowly read Psalm 28. What is the Holy Spirit drawing to your attention? *Write the phrases you feel particularly struck by.*

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Do not worry if you do not have a comment for every section.

Just follow the Spirit's lead.

Read verses 1-3.

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Read verses 3-5.

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Read verses 6-7.

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Read verses 8-9.

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Please make a special note of the verse that most fed your hungry heart today. Consider writing it on a little card and carrying it with you. Keep the card on your desk or your kitchen window sill. Type it as a reminder in your cell phone. Let it be a daily reminder to you until God gives you a new word to marinate in.

*Soak it up, Sweet Sister. This is His word to you today.*

*Thinking back over all you've considered here, what does God desire for you today?*

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*With what new hope or insight do you close today's study? Write it here and keep this thought before you.*

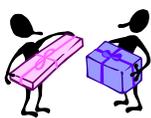


*God's special gift to me:* \_\_\_\_\_

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*Take-Away: God's ever-flowing fountain gushes freely towards me; I must simply turn to it, step into it, and then soak in it until my heart has grown deliciously wrinkled and quiet in His truth.*



Gathering together with other believers and sharing with one another is vital for a flourishing relationship with God. Even in our study of Adam and Eve we see the dynamic that humans need other humans. *Spend a few minutes looking back over your week's entries. As you think back on all that has happened in this last week, where do you recognize God's fingerprints, whispers, or guidance?*

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*What is your most significant "take-away" this week? Prayerfully consider how you can share this with someone this week.*