

# Having a Real Relationship With God



Kay Arthur

**4**minute  
BIBLE STUDIES

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**PRECEPT MINISTRIES** INTERNATIONAL



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P R E S S

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## HOW TO USE THIS STUDY

This small-group study is for people who are interested in learning more about what the Bible says, 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 mother's group meeting in a home, or a smaller Sunday-school class. (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, while you're together*.

However, you'll need a facilitator to lead the group—someone to 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 may appear either before or after the instructions or in the midst of your observations or discussion. 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. Really *read* the Scriptures, asking God to show everyone His answers.

# HAVING A REAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

**H**ave you ever wondered if it's possible to have a meaningful relationship with God? An authentic relationship that works in the day-in-and-day-out circumstances of life? Do you hunger for a genuine experience of community and of God?

This is an inductive study that will help you discover for yourself how such a relationship is possible. By *inductive* we mean you are going to go straight to the source—the Bible—to see what God has to say about the relationship He wants to have with you and about the community He wants to bring you into.


## WEEK ONE

**Leader:** Take a few minutes and discuss where our culture is and what people are seeking. What are some of the questions they are asking? How do they feel about life? about God? Do they have a religion that works? a belief—a relationship—that has changed their lives? One that they feel is authentic?

### OBSERVE

Have you ever wondered what we have to do, what we have to become in order to merit a relationship with God? Let's read what God has to say in the New Testament book of Romans.

**Leader:** Read aloud Romans 5:6-11. Have the students circle the words **we** and **us** in the text. As the students mark each pronoun, have them say it aloud as you come to it in the text. That way everyone will be sure to mark every reference.

Ask the students to read through the same verses again on their own, and when they come to the word **love**, to mark it by drawing a heart over it, like this: 

### ROMANS 5:6-11

**6** For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

**7** For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

### INSIGHT

*Sinners* means people who basically run their own lives, doing things their own way rather than God's way. Therefore they fall short of God's standard and separate themselves from God.

### DISCUSS

According to verse 8, when did God demonstrate His love to us and how?

What was our status when God demonstrated His love to us?

Look at the occurrences of the words *we* and *us* that you have marked and discuss what you learn about the state of mankind when Christ died for them.



Does this raise these questions in your mind:

Why are we helpless?

What is a sinner?


Whose enemy are we and why?


Those are good questions that will be answered next week.

## **OBSERVE**

Now let's take a closer look at this passage and see what these verses tell us about God and Jesus Christ.

Read through the text again on pages 6-7, each one on your own, and mark every reference to **God** and to **Jesus Christ**.

Mark God like this: 

Mark Jesus Christ with a cross: 

**ROMANS 5:6-11**

**6** For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

**7** For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die.

**8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

**9** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him.

**10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God

List everything you have learned about God and about Jesus Christ in the sidebar column on page 7.

**INSIGHT**

*Justified* means to be acquitted, to be declared not guilty, to be made righteous, to be put in right standing.

*Reconciled* means to no longer be at enmity (or enemies) with one another. The dictionary definition is “to make friends again; to win over; to settle a quarrel, a disagreement; to make satisfied; to be no longer opposed.”

*Reconciliation* means to change from being at enmity (or separated) to becoming friends.

**DISCUSS**

What did you learn about God from these verses?

What did you learn about Jesus Christ from these verses?

through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

In whose eyes do we need to be justified? Why?

<sup>11</sup> And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

How are we are justified?

**GOD**

According to verse 9, what do we need to be saved from? How will we be saved? What does this tell you about people who never have an authentic relationship with God?

**JESUS CHRIST**

Discuss what it means to be reconciled so you make sure you understand what you read in the Insight Box. Then discuss how and when we are reconciled to God. What did Christ do that made that reconciliation possible? (You may have covered this already, but review is good—so go for it!)

### INSIGHT

We didn't become sinners at enmity with God because God pulled away from mankind, abandoning us, leaving us on our own. Our relationship with God was damaged by man's own willfulness. At the beginning of creation, Adam and Eve, the first man and woman God created, made a choice to listen to someone else rather than to God. Like rebellious children, they walked away from the protection of being obedient to their Creator and Sustainer. Adam's decision to eat something God had forbidden him to eat broke his intimacy with God. Consequently we became ungodly sinners, enemies of God.

## WRAP IT UP

Just think: If we are reconciled by Jesus' death on the cross, then verse 10 of Romans 5 says we shall be saved by His life! In other words, Jesus didn't stay dead. He rose from the dead. He lives and we will live too, saved by His life. We will look at this in greater depth later.

The question you need to ask yourself is this: Where do you stand in your relationship with God if the Bible is true? Are you a sinner, ungodly, and an enemy of God? According to what you have read, is there hope for you? Can you have an authentic relationship with God?

Have you received reconciliation and become God's friend—or does there seem to be something standing in your way? If it's the latter, do not despair. There is hope. Simply talk to God about it. Tell Him where you think you are and what your questions are. Then wait for Him to answer. He will, because He longs to have an intimate and meaningful relationship with you!

Next week we're going to take a good look at this issue of sin. What makes us sinners in God's eyes? What is sin? What form does it take, and where does it lead? It will be most enlightening.