

KAY
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When *the*
Hurt
Runs
Deep

Healing *and* Hope
for Life's Desperate Moments

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INDIVIDUAL OR SMALL-GROUP STUDY GUIDE

The following questions are designed to further your journey of healing through the study of God's Word. The guide follows the structure of the book, taking you deeper into Scripture passages mentioned in each chapter with the intent that "grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord" (2 Peter 1:2) as you apply God's truth to your life.

Whether you use this guide on your own, with a prayer partner, or in a small group, my fervent prayer, beloved of God, is that it will draw you more and more deeply into the Bible and into understanding God's heart for you. God longs for you to know His healing, His love, and His hope, even when the hurt runs deep.

CHAPTER ONE: "IT WASN'T SUPPOSED TO BE THIS WAY!"

1. When in your life have you said, "It wasn't supposed to be this way"?
2. Read John 16:33. What "tribulation" is in your life right now? What would God's peace look like if you, in faith's trust, allowed it to overcome that pain?

CHAPTER TWO: YOU DON'T SUFFER ALONE

1. Read Genesis 37:1–31. What prompted Joseph's brothers to hate him? How did their hate lead to betrayal?
2. Read Genesis 39. Why did Joseph become successful in Egypt? What did "success" look like for him in verses 1–6? In what ways was Joseph's later imprisonment also a sign of success?
3. Joseph acted with integrity yet ended up in jail. When have you suffered even when you were not to blame for something? What happened to you inside? How did you deal with it—or did you? What difference does it make today in your view of that experience to know that God was with you every moment?
4. In what ways were Joseph's circumstances in prison similar to his circumstances in Egypt before his imprisonment?

5. Read Genesis 40. How did Joseph respond to being put in jail? What does this suggest about how God calls you to respond when you are somewhere you don't want to be?

6. What have you learned about God from the circumstances of Joseph's life so far? Stopping to assess this is so vital to your mental and spiritual health and wholeness.

CHAPTER THREE: IS THERE PURPOSE IN YOUR PAIN?

1. Read Genesis 41:1–40. Considering the passages from Genesis that you've read in this study so far, who betrayed Joseph in his lifetime? In what ways did Joseph's response to Pharaoh (vv. 15–32) reflect humility and wisdom rather than bitterness over these betrayals? Why was he able to respond in this way? What does God want you to see?

2. Read Genesis 45:1–24. What do Joseph's tears in front of his brothers (vv. 1–2) signify?

3. What do Joseph's words in verses 5–8 reveal about his belief in God's purposes?

4. What did Joseph tell his brothers not to do on the way home (v. 24)? Why? What does this suggest about Joseph's perspective on his suffering?

5. Read Genesis 50:20. What was Joseph placing above his emotions or pain? How did a sense of God's purpose free him to do this?

6. The psalmist recounted Joseph's story in Psalm 105. How did the psalmist begin in verses 1–4? How would you describe the perspective of these verses? Why is this significant in light of Joseph's suffering and the suffering of the Israelites? Why was Joseph's story worthy of passing down to future generations?

7. What difference does it make—in our perspective, in our ability to cope, in the lives of others—when we confront pain and find purpose in it rather than glossing over it?

CHAPTER FOUR: WHAT KIND OF GOD ALLOWS OUR PAIN?

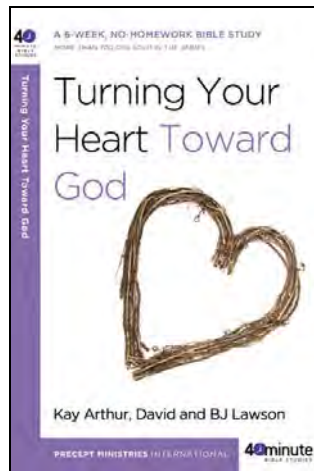
1. Read Psalm 103. What did the psalmist say God *does*? What words did the psalmist use to describe who God *is*?
2. How does your understanding of who *God* is affect your understanding of who *you* are? Why does your state of weakness make God's relationship with you even more significant?
3. Why is understanding the sovereignty of God important to healing?
4. Prayerfully read Revelation 21:3–5 in light of your pain today. What phrase or word brings the most hope to you? Why?
5. Why does the fact that God will one day wipe away our tears make a difference right now? What does this say about God's character and power?

6. What would you like God to “make new” (Revelation 21:5) in your life?
What does God promise you about the future? Can knowing what the future holds enable you to handle the present? How? (You might want to memorize 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 after reading the whole chapter. It’s awesome!)

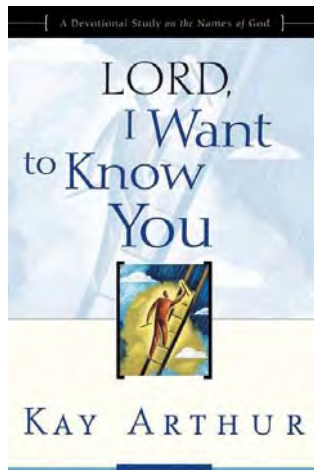
7. How does the truth that “God is love” (1 John 4:8) make a difference when you suffer? How does knowledge of God’s love free you to find His purpose in your pain?

8. Read Romans 5:6–11. In what ways does this passage focus on realities and actions rather than emotions?

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