

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE + STREAMING VIDEO

SIX SESSIONS

MARGARET FEINBERG

# THE GOD YOU NEED TO KNOW

12 PRACTICES  
TO AWAKEN YOUR  
RELATIONSHIP WITH  
THE HOLY SPIRIT



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# LEADER'S GUIDE

If you are reading this, you have likely agreed to lead a group through *The God You Need to Know*. I am so proud of you! Thank you for loving those around you enough to be willing to serve them in this way. I have a hunch the Spirit will bless you in the weeks to come.

*The God You Need to Know* is a six-session study built around video-teaching content and small-group interaction. As the group leader, imagine yourself as the host of a lovely dinner party . . . without dinner, unless you love serving food like I do. Your job is to care for your “guests” so that as they arrive, they feel comfortable, welcome, and excited to learn straight away.

As the group leader, you are more of a facilitator than a teacher. Your role is not to answer all the questions or reteach the content—the video, book, and study guide will do most of that work. Your job is to guide the experience and cultivate your small group into a learning and growing community. This will make it a place for members to process, question, reflect, and grow together.

There are several elements in this leader’s guide that will help you as you structure your study and reflection time, so follow along and take advantage of each one.

## BEFORE YOU BEGIN

### Materials

Before your first meeting, make sure the participants have a copy of this study guide. Alternately, you can hand out the study guides at your first meeting and give the group members some time to look over the material and ask any preliminary questions. During your first meeting, be sure to send a sheet around the room and have the members write down their names, phone numbers, and email addresses so you can keep in touch with them during the week.

## **Free Streaming Video Access**

Additionally, spend a few minutes going over how to access the FREE streaming videos using the code printed on the inside front cover of each study guide. Helping everyone understand how accessible this material is will go a long way if anyone (including you) has to miss a meeting or if any member of your group chooses to lead a study after the conclusion of this one.

A few commonly-asked questions and answers:

**Do I have to subscribe to StudyGateway?** No. If you sign up for StudyGateway for the first time using [studygateway.com/redeem](https://studygateway.com/redeem) you will not be prompted to subscribe, then or after.

**Do I set up another account if I do another study later?** No. The next time you do a HarperChristian Resources study with FREE streaming access, all you need to do is enter the new access code and the videos will be added to your account library.

There is a short video available that walks you through how to access your streaming video library. You can choose to show the video at your first meeting, or simply direct your group to the HarperChristian Resources YouTube channel to watch it at their convenience.

HOW TO ACCESS FREE STREAMING VIDEOS: <https://youtu.be/JPhG06ksOn8>

## **Group Size**

Generally, the ideal size for a group is eight to ten people, which ensures everyone will have enough time to participate in discussions. If you have more people, you might want to break up the main group into smaller subgroups. Encourage those who show up at the first meeting to commit to attending the duration of the study, as this will help the group members get to know each other, create stability for the group, and help you know how to prepare each week.

## Opening

At the beginning of each session welcome everyone, invite a participant to pray for the time together, and if it fits within your group's timeframe, consider discussing the opening questions or engaging in the opening activity (Session 3 and Session 6).

When prompted to select a volunteer to read a passage of any sort, please take the temperature of the room, as it were. Note the members of your group who do not readily raise their hands to volunteer. Reading Scripture aloud can incite anxiety or nervousness in some people. Please take the time in Session 1 to communicate the value of reading Scripture aloud in community. Encourage all your group members to try it at some point. Be clear that there is no bad reading of God's Word; rather it is meant to be read and shared with others. So, everyone should consider your group space a safe place to try to grow in this practice. One goal of this study is to grow participants in their overall engagement of God's Word, which includes feeling comfortable and confident with the words on the pages.

## Preparing Your Group for the Study

Before watching your first video at your first meeting, let the group members know that each session contains five days' worth of Bible study and reflection materials to complete during the week between group meetings. While the personal study is optional, it will help the members cement the concepts presented during the group study time, dive deeper into the content, and encourage them to spend time each day in God's Word. It is my prayer and hope that you and your group will find joy and anticipation in reading God's Word and growing in relationship with the Holy Spirit during this study.

Also, invite your group members to bring any questions and insights they uncovered while reading to your next meeting, especially if they had a breakthrough moment or if they didn't understand something.

## WEEKLY PREPARATION

As the leader, there are a few things you should do to prepare for each meeting:

- **Watch the video.** This will help you to become familiar with the content that's being presented and give you insight into what may or may not be brought up in the discussion time.
- **Read through the group discussion section.** This will help you to become familiar with the questions you will be asking, the focus Scripture, and the context. This practice allows you to better anticipate any alterations you might need or want to make in the discussion time for your best group experience.
- **Decide which questions you definitely want to discuss.** Based on the amount of questions and the length of group discussion, you may not be able to get through all the questions, so pre-select four to five questions that you definitely want to cover.
- **Be familiar with the questions you want to discuss.** Every group has times when there are no respondents and the question falls flat out of the gate. This is normal and okay. Be prepared with YOUR answer to the questions so you can always offer to share as an icebreaker and example, but try to be the last to answer, rather than the first. What you want to avoid is always answering the questions and impeding the discussion rather than helping it flourish. Foremost, encourage members of the group to answer questions.
- **Remind your group there are no wrong answers or dumb questions.** Note that in most cases there will not be one "right" answer to the question. Answers will vary, especially when the group members are being asked to share their personal experiences and stories.
- **Pray for your group.** Pray for your group members throughout the week and ask God to lead them as they study his Word.
- **Bring extra supplies to your meeting.** The members should bring their own

pens for writing notes, but it's a good idea to have extras available for those who forget. You may also want to bring paper and additional Bibles. If you find group members who are without a personal copy of the Bible, please let me know. There are a lot of great resources for low-cost outreach Bibles. I do not want anyone to be without a copy of the Bible if I can help it.

## STRUCTURING THE DISCUSSION TIME

You will need to determine with your group how long you want to meet each week so you can plan your time accordingly. Generally, most groups like to meet for either sixty minutes or ninety minutes, so you could use one of the following schedules:

| Section   | 60 min        | 90 min        |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| <b>WELCOME AND PRAYER</b> (members arrive and get settled; leader reads or summarizes introduction) | 1–5 minutes   | 1–5 minutes   |
| <b>OPENING GROUP DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY</b>  | 5–10 minutes  | 5–10 minutes  |
| <b>WATCH VIDEO</b> (watch the teaching video together and take notes)                               | 5–10 minutes  | 5–10 minutes  |
| <b>GROUP DISCUSSION</b> (discuss the Bible study questions you selected ahead of time)              | 20–30 minutes | 50–60 minutes |
| <b>CLOSING PRAYER</b> (pray together as a group and dismiss)  | 1–5 minutes   | 1–5 minutes   |

As the group leader, it is up to you to keep track of the time and keep things moving along according to your schedule. You might want to set a timer for each segment so both you and the group members know when your time is up. (Note that there are some good phone apps for timers that play a gentle chime or other pleasant sound instead of a disruptive noise.)

Don't be concerned if the group members are quiet or slow to share. People are often quiet when they are pulling together their ideas, and this might be a new experience for them. Just ask a question and let it hang in the air until someone shares. You can then say, "Thank you. What about others? What came to you when you watched that portion of the video?"

## GROUP DYNAMICS

Leading a group through *The God You Need to Know* will prove to be highly rewarding both to you and your group members. However, this doesn't mean you will not encounter any challenges along the way. Discussions can get off track. Group members may not be sensitive to the needs and ideas of others. Some might worry they will be expected to talk about matters that make them feel awkward. Others may express comments that result in disagreements. To help ease this strain on you and the group, consider the following ground rules:

- When someone raises a question or comment that is off the main topic, suggest you deal with it another time, or, if you feel led to go in that direction, let the group know you will be spending some time discussing it.
- If someone asks a question you don't know how to answer, admit it and move on. At your discretion, feel free to invite group members to comment on questions that call for personal experience.
- If you find one or two people are dominating the discussion time, direct a few questions to others in the group. Outside the main group time, ask the more dominating members to help you draw out the quieter ones. Work to make them a part of the solution instead of the problem.

- When a disagreement occurs, encourage the group members to process the matter in love. Encourage those on opposite sides to restate what they heard the other side say about the matter, and then invite each side to evaluate if that perception is accurate. Lead the group in examining other scriptures related to the topic and look for common ground.

When any of these issues arise, encourage your group members to follow these words from the Bible: “Love one another” (John 13:34), “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone” (Romans 12:18), and “Be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry” (James 1:19). This will make your group time more rewarding and beneficial for everyone who attends.

## SESSION-BY-SESSION OVERVIEWS

### 01 Session 1: In Step with the Spirit

**Description:** This session asks participants to consider that Acts 2 and Pentecost are not the Holy Spirit’s grand debut; rather, they’re a culmination of the Spirit’s presence and power since the beginning of time.

**Scripture covered in this session:** Genesis 1:2; Psalm 51:10–11; Judges 15:14; Acts 2:1–18

**Scripture Memory:** Luke 11:13

**Scripture during personal study days:** Acts 1:8; 2:38; John 1:1–5, 9–13; 14:1, 16, 25–26; 16:13–15; Romans 5:3–5; 8:10–11, 14–16, 26; Luke 11:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 3:16, 18; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Genesis 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:5; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Jude 1:20–21; Colossians 1:15–16

**Discussion Question choices / notes:**

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**Prayer requests:**

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## 02 Session 2: The Spirit Who Hovers

**Description:** This session reveals that since the opening of Genesis, the Spirit appears, not as a momentary flash, but as one who hovers over the uncertainty and unknown in our cosmos and our personal lives. This reminds us that no matter what we're facing, chaos does not have the final say.

**Scripture covered in this session:** Genesis 1:1–2; Deuteronomy 32:10–11; Luke 13:34; Psalm 139:7–16

**Scripture Memory:** Genesis 1:1–2

**Scripture during personal study days:** Job 27:3–4; Genesis 2:7; 37:5–9; 41:14–33; Ecclesiastes 12:7; John 3:7–8; 14:26; 20:21–22; Luke 10:21; 24:32; 1 Thessalonians 1:4–5; Romans 15:13; Acts 2:17, 37–38; 4:31; 9:31; 13:2–4; Ephesians 4:2–3; Judges 14:6; Ezekiel 3:14–15; 8:3; 36:26–27; Isaiah 61:1–3; 11:2; 1 Corinthians 2:10–12; Psalm 45:1

**Discussion Question choices / notes:**

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**Prayer requests:**

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**03****Session 3: The Spirit Who Makes**

**Description:** This session examines how the same Spirit who empowered Bezalel, Oholiab, and their guild of artisans, empowers us to be makers who display the glory of God.

**Scripture covered in this session:** Exodus 31:1–7; 35:34; 38:23; Psalm 90:17

**Scripture Memory:** Exodus 31:1–4

**Scripture during personal study days:** Proverbs 3:19–20; 9:10; Colossians 1:9–12; Acts 2:42–47; Numbers 11:10–17, 24–29; Ephesians 3:16–19; Daniel 1:4, 12–13, 17, 20; 4:8–9, 18; 5:9–12, 14; 6:1–4, 10; 10:2–3 (or Daniel chapters 1–6; 10); Exodus 31:3

**Discussion Question choices / notes:**

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**Prayer requests:**

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## 04 Session 4: The Beauty of Discernment

**Description:** This session explores how just like David and Gideon we need markers for recognizing and discerning the Spirit’s presence and prompting in our lives. It offers five practical guardrail questions for the discernment process.

**Scripture covered in this session:** Judges 6:12–24, 33–34; 1 Samuel 16:13; 2 Samuel 23:1–2; Matthew 23:34

**Scripture Memory:** Galatians 5:22–23

**Scripture during personal study days:** Judges 6:36–40; Genesis 24:12–19; 1 Samuel 14:6–12; Luke 1:5–20, 62–66; Matthew 14:22–29; 18:20; 22:37–40; John 15:13; 17:17; 20:24–29; Acts 1:21–26; Psalm 119:105; Hebrews 4:12; Deuteronomy 6:4–6; Galatians 5:22–23; Philippians 4:7; Ecclesiastes 4:9; Proverbs 27:17; James 5:16; Proverbs 12:18; Job 12:10; 32:1–14, 17–19; 33:4; 1 Corinthians 13:1–3

### Discussion Question choices / notes:

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### Prayer requests:

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## Session 5: The Spirit's Delightful Surprises

**Description:** This session looks to Ezekiel and how the Spirit of the Living God works through divine sequences and timetables, carefully and purposefully bringing about new life over time. It examines how the Spirit sometimes surprises and delights us in the most wonderful ways.

**Scripture covered in this session:** Ezekiel 2:1–8; 37:3–10; Romans 8:11

**Scripture Memory:** Ezekiel 37:5–6

**Scripture during personal study days:** 1 Kings 19:1–18; Genesis 39:20–23; 41:38–41; Judges 3:7–11; Luke 2:25–35; Romans 14:17

**Discussion Question choices / notes:**

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**Prayer requests:**

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**06** Session 6: When the Spirit Says “Go!”

**Description:** This final session weaves together the lessons from throughout the study to reveal how the Spirit works throughout the Old Testament. We arrive at Acts 2 and Pentecost and can’t help but think, *Of course, it would happen this way!* It challenges participants to practice small obedience whenever the Spirit says “Go!” and live in holy awe of what might unfold.

**Scripture covered in this session:** Acts 2:1–11, 38–41

**Scripture Memory:** Acts 2:38–39

**Scripture during personal study days:** Judges 4:4–9; Isaiah 6:1–9; Jeremiah 1:4–10; Amos 7:12–15; Matthew 28:19–20; Acts 8:26–40

**Discussion Question choices / notes:**

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**Prayer requests:**

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## MEET MARGARET

Margaret Feinberg is a radiant soul whose infectious laughter and boundless enthusiasm have earned her a reputation as someone who doesn't just teach about joy—she embodies it.

Growing up with an artist's heart, a storyteller's mind, and a journalist's curiosity, Margaret has spent most of her life inspiring others to live with wide-eyed faith, unbridled joy, and a deep sense of wonder when it comes to God and Scripture.

Because, as she so often reminds us, God's presence is all around—if we'll just pause long enough to delight in the One who delights in us.

Host of the podcast, *The Joycast*, Margaret is a Bible teacher and speaker at churches and leading conferences. Her books and Bible studies, including *Scouting the Divine*, *Fight Back With Joy*, *Taste and See*, and *Revelation: Extravagant Hope*, have sold well over a million copies and received critical acclaim and extensive media coverage from *USA Today*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Washington Post*, and more. She was even named one of 50 women most shaping culture and the church today by *Christianity Today*.

When she's not writing or speaking at gatherings across the globe, you'll likely find Margaret making creative messes throughout the house, swimming like a dolphin at her local pool, or laughing around the table with friends, her husband, Leif, and their forever puppy, Zoom.

Margaret loves connecting with readers online and through speaking at live events. Whether you have a heartfelt or whimsy message to send or you're planning an event, she'd love to connect!

Feel free to drop her a note at [hello@margaretfeinberg.com](mailto:hello@margaretfeinberg.com).

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