

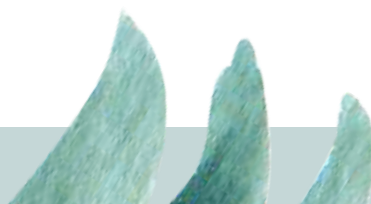


A BIBLE STUDY ON:

Hesed:

**GOD'S
COVENANT
KEEPING LOVE**

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Hesed: God's Covenant-Keeping Love

Introduction

When someone says "I Love you!", how does that make you feel? In general, we all feel happy and joyful when someone says I love you. What if the person that said it to you was your crush, your spouse, your mother or father? The relationship between you and that other person matters when it comes to love, doesn't it?

When my husband types out a text to me: "I love you!" I have a different reaction than when a friend sends me a message with those same words. Both make me feel loved, but because of the deeper intimacy with my husband the words hold more value.

What if I told you God loves you? Maybe you are walking through a hard season and you think, "It sure doesn't feel like God loves me right now..." Friend, I'm here to tell you that God not only loves you, but He is not angry with you nor does He hold you at a distance.

In the Bible there are a lot of words used for love. One of the Hebrew words we find there is the word "Hesed." This is more than just an emotional feeling or deep affection. This word means God loves us according to His covenant.

What does God's "covenant-keeping" love mean?

Hesed is one of the deepest words to communicate God's amazing love for His people. This is a special word used to describe God's love in the Old Testament. In English it means God's loving kindness, mercy, and compassion. It holds the idea of an unconditional and completely faithful love. Here is what it looks like in Hebrew: חסד

For this month's study we are going to dive into this idea of God's "hesed" love. First, we will look at seven stories that reflect God's covenant keeping love. Then, we will look in the most common place this word is found in the Bible: the book of Psalms. Finally, we will look at three ways we can respond to God's everlasting love. How does His love change the way we live?

Each week contains three sections. Observation, Interpretation, and Application. On the next page you will find a detailed explanation of each step. As you study God's Word it isn't about getting the right answers.

The first two weeks are designed to be done in a week, but they are not divided into days. I encourage you to take a 15 or 20 minute timer and set it before beginning. Start with prayer and ask God to open your eyes to His word. (You can also find sample prayers to pray over your Bible study in a separate PDF.) Next, just spend the remainder of the time answering the questions. Use the Bible dictionary and commentary when you get stuck. Remember: The point is not to have all of the "correct" answers, but to learn to read and study God's word on your own. After the timer is open, close in prayer and write out any reflections you have from your study time on the reflection page of the study. Do the same thing each day.

For week three you will have four days of study and a fifth for reflection. During the final week you are going to practice the method of "WORD STUDY." This will help you further your understanding of God's hesed love for you, but it will also help you develop the idea of a word study. Don't forget, you have the teaching videos in the Teachable course to help you each week!

Three Steps to Deeper Bible Study

Observation

Most of the time we will spend trying to understand the text without other people's thoughts clouding our view. We will learn how to research cultural insights, historical background, and author information. Who? When? Why? What? and Where? will be some of the questions we will try to answer during the first four steps. We are going to try to avoid opinions. We want to understand what the Bible literally says. This will take the longest time. You might spend 2-3 days just on this step!

Interpretation

After we have a clear understanding of the passage, we will try to figure out the meaning. Why did the author write this? The next step will take you through figuring out what you think the text means first, but then we will move on to what others have to say. We might be able to figure out what we think most of the verses are saying, but we might still have questions. This is where we will use the Resource page to help expand our knowledge. This step might take a whole day or two to complete.

Application


In this final step we will ask ourselves the same application questions each week. What aspect of God's character has been revealed in the text? How is this character trait illustrated? How does understanding that characteristic of God change the way I should think and act? How can I better live in the world based on these truths? Ultimately the Bible is about God. When we know Him better, we can learn how to live. Reflecting and changing also involves prayer. So make sure prayer is a part of this last step as well. This will just take a few minutes of your last day of study.

One of the things that might benefit you is a Bible dictionary. There are lots of great ones you can buy, but this [one](#) is free. Another great resource is a commentary. You can find Matthew Henry's commentary for free online [here](#). Finally, a **Bible with study notes is a valuable tool**. The Holman Christian Standard Study Bible is a great study Bible if you want to purchase one.



Week One: A Story of Hesed: Moses

We all have stories of *hesed* – seeing God’s love in our lives, but sometimes it is hard to remember those times. We are going to look at the life of Moses this week and focus on one incident that changed Moses forever. We are going to see God Himself describe Himself as “loving.” After Moses encountered God on the mountain in Exodus 34, it says his face “shone.” He was changed. Let’s look at how God describes Himself here and why it is important for us today.



Observation

Read Exodus 34.

Who is in this chapter?

Who is speaking?

What do they say?

Where does this account take place?

What has happened before Moses is on the mountain?

What do you know about the nation of Israel?

Read Exodus 2-3 to get an idea of who Moses and the nation of Israel are.
What do you know about Moses?



Observation

According to Exodus 34, what is Moses afraid to do?

Read these passages to get a better understanding of what God had done in Egypt:

- Psalm 78:12-29
- Acts 7:20-42

In Exodus 34:5-6 we see God declare his character to Moses. How does God describe Himself?

What is Moses' response? (Exodus 34:8-9)

Interpretation

Spend some time writing down or meditating on Exodus 34:5-7. What strikes you about this description of God?

Does it make a difference that this is God's own description of Himself? How does it impact your thinking knowing God is telling Moses "This is who I am."?

What is Moses' response to God's answer? (Exodus 34:8-9)



Interpretation

Spend some time writing down or meditating on Exodus 34:5–7. What strikes you about this description of God?



Why do you think Moses responds the way he does?

Refresh yourself on what the Ten Commandments are in Exodus 20.

In Exodus 34:10–27 God is responding to Moses by repeating the Ten Commandments and the feasts that He had already explained to Moses.

What correlation do the Ten Commandments have to God's hesed love?

According to these verses, do we need to keep doing things to earn God's love?

Ephesians 2:8

Romans 5:8


1 John 4:19



God's love for the children of Israel came **before** the Law was given. So there was no way their keeping of the Law would make God love them more. Just like us, salvation comes **before** we love God. It is because of God's love for us that we can love Him and keep His commandments. Paul, Peter, and James talk about this idea of God's love coming before we could earn it.

Read what [Matthew Henry says about Exodus 34](#) and write your observations or new insights here:





Application


In these verses we see God revealing to Moses who He truly is. It is important to note that this description of God is given by God. The statements God makes to Moses are 100% true, because they are not just a man's view of God. God is telling Moses (and us) who He is! The first step to really believing in God's word is to believe God is who He says He is.

Why do you think we feel like we need to earn God's love?





Why can we never earn God's love?

Does knowing who God is – both His character and actions – change how we view God's love?



How does it help you when you face.... Rejection? Fear? Uncertainty? Loneliness? Pain?



When I was younger I was the “good girl.” I wanted to try harder and be better at everything. In fact, I got so wrapped up in being good I forgot I was loved. I remember once in college I read a devotional and this phrase has stuck with me: *God is not angry with you.*

If you are a Christian, born again and a servant of Christ, Romans 8:1 is your promise. There is no condemnation. God is not angry with you when you mess up. God is not angry with you because you fail. In fact, our very weakness is why God is the one who loves us. My story of *hesed* is that I was a good-girl who was saved, but constantly striving to be good enough for God’s love. The bad news and good news is there is no “being good enough.” God’s love for me is beyond all I can ever imagine!

Write out your own story of *hesed*.





Week 2: *Psalms of Hese*

Oftentimes we find ourselves questioning God’s “hesed” love because of suffering. When my heart is hurting and I’m facing the grief of disappointment my favorite place to go is the book of Psalms. Let’s take a look at three psalms and discover how God’s *hesed* love shines bright through our suffering.

Observation

Start out by reading Psalms 23, 36, and 42.

Answer these questions for each psalm:

What is the author’s problem?

How does God solve this?

How is God described?

What does God do?

What does the author do or how does he respond?

Psalm 23

Psalm 36

Psalm 42





Interpretation

Write a summary of each of the psalms. Think, I have 3-5 sentences to describe what is happening or what is the message of

What is the purpose of Psalm 23?

What is the purpose of Psalm 36?

What is the purpose of Psalm 42?

Here are the verses that mention the word *hesed* in these chapters. Look up each verse and write down what you learn about God's *hesed* love.

Psalm 23:6

Psalm 36:5, 7, 10

Psalm 42:8

Each time the psalmist suffers, he looks to God. Each time, he finds that God is what? What is God according to these psalms? How does this relate to God's *hesed* love?






Application

In these verses we see God described as a Shepherd. A sheep does not offer anything to the shepherd. In fact, the sheep cannot. The same is true about us. God, our Shepherd, comes to us even though we have nothing to offer Him. In fact, there have been many times in my life I see all I have to offer God is a broken heart. It is in those moments, however, that God calls us to draw near and experience His hesed love. Dane Ortlund in his book, "Gently & Lowly" says it this way:

"We cannot present a reason for Christ to finally close off his heart to his own sheep. No such reason exists. Every human friend has a limit. If we offend enough, if a relationship gets damaged enough, if we betray enough times, we are cast out. The walls go up. With Christ, our sins and weaknesses are the very resumé items that qualify us to approach him. Nothing but coming to him is required—first at conversion and a thousand times thereafter until we are with him upon death."

List out your pain and heartache here. Take a moment and just pray over these things. Hand each one back to God in prayer. After that, use a colored pencil or crayon to color over these pains. I like to use pink because it reminds me of a sunrise (new mercies) and it is close to red (Christ's blood). Shade those things and realize that God's love covers over any sin, shame, heartache, or grief that you carry.





My first heartache was when I was a new mom. My path to motherhood was pretty smooth, but after delivering our son via c-section (which I hated), I had trouble nursing and suddenly my body and mind were not the same. I battled postpartum depression and anxiety, but I didn't even know it at the time. My entire life I had been in control and suddenly God had shown me that indeed I was not in control. I questioned God's love for me.

During my pregnancy with my third child, I struggled with extreme anxiety and depression due to the hormones. There were nights I was awake all night, crying and clinging to my husband in desperation. There was no reason to feel this way – but depression doesn't need a reason. Friend, I doubted God's love for me in those moments. I doubted everything and especially His love for me because let's be honest, how could a good God allow such suffering?

We measure God's love with the Word of God. The Bible is the only source of truth, so in the Word we find hope! We can see God's love all throughout scripture, but I especially love the psalms. At the end of this book you will find 20 psalms of God's love you can read!

Reflect on God's *hesed* and suffering in your life.





Week 3 - Living Out Hered

This week will be divided into several psalms that talk about God's love and how it changes our lives. What do we do in response to God's amazing love for us?

Day 1 - Praising and Worshiping God

Psalm 136

Use your skills of Observation & Interpretation to answer these questions:

How is God's love described here?




What phrase is repeated over and over again?

Why do you think the author repeats himself so much?

What phrase is used over and over again in Psalm 118?


Compare Psalm 136 and Psalm 118. How are they alike and different?






If God’s love is unending, we are free to worship Him all of the time. God’s love should cause our hearts to want to love and rejoice! God’s love also relates to every aspect of our lives. Make a list of what God does according to Psalm 136. His love is involved in everything!





Use your skills of Application to answer these questions:

Why does God's love for us cause us to worship?




How can you worship God today?

If God's covenant-keeping love is unending, what are the implications about worship?

What do the following verses tell you about worshipping God?

Revelation 4:8-10

Revelation 7:11





Day 2 - Spending Time with God in the Morning

Ps. 59:16, Ps. 90:14, Ps. 143:8

Use your skills of Observation & Interpretation to answer these questions:

How is God's love described in these verses?



What idea or theme is common in all three verses?






Why do you think God wants us to spend time with Him?



Is there something special about morning time?







The phrase “in the morning” could simply mean making God a priority in your life. Making Him first. It doesn’t just mean we need to spend time in the morning hours, but just that we should make God a priority. Does this change how you see these verses? If so, how?





Use your skills of Application to answer these questions:

Why does God's love cause us to want to spend time with Him?



How can you make God a priority in your life today?

If God's covenant-keeping love is not based on our own works, what are the implications about spending time with Him?



Day 3 - Loving Others

Micah 6:7, Proverbs 3:3, Proverbs 21:21

Use your skills of Observation & Interpretation to answer these questions:



How is God's love described in these verses?

What idea or theme is common in all three verses?




Why do you think God wants us to love?







How are we to love, according to these verses?



Does love mean we overlook being hurt?



Does love mean we are a “doormat” and let others step over top of us?

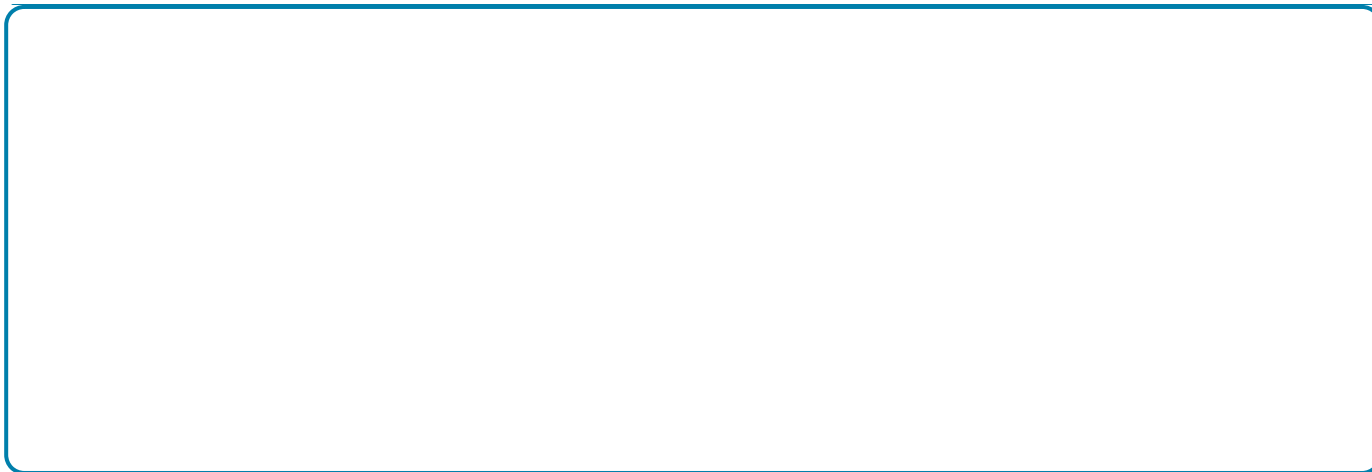




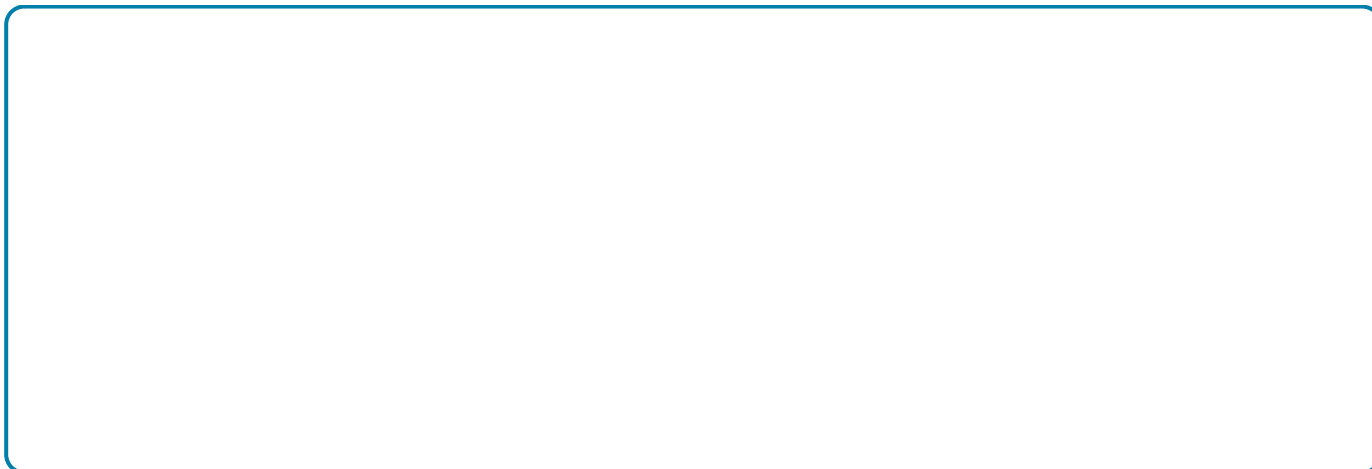
God's love means we are free to love others without trying to protect ourselves. Will we get hurt? Of course! But we are safe to allow others into our hearts, knowing that ultimately God's love is completely satisfying and perfect.

Use your skills of Application to answer these questions:

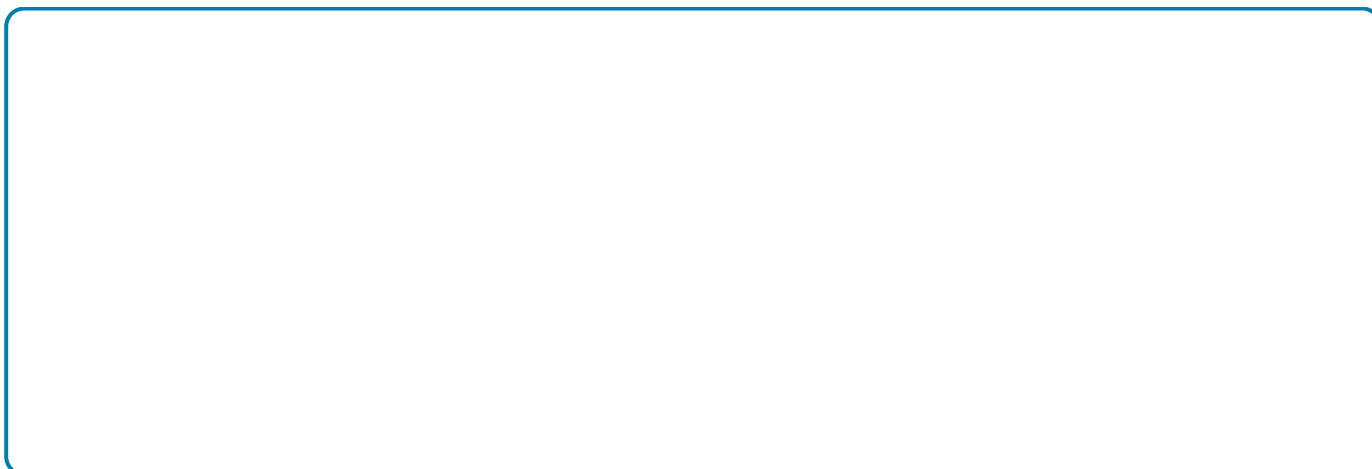
Why does God's love cause us to want to love others?



How can you make loving others a priority in your life today?



If God's covenant-keeping love will always be there for us, what are the implications of loving others?



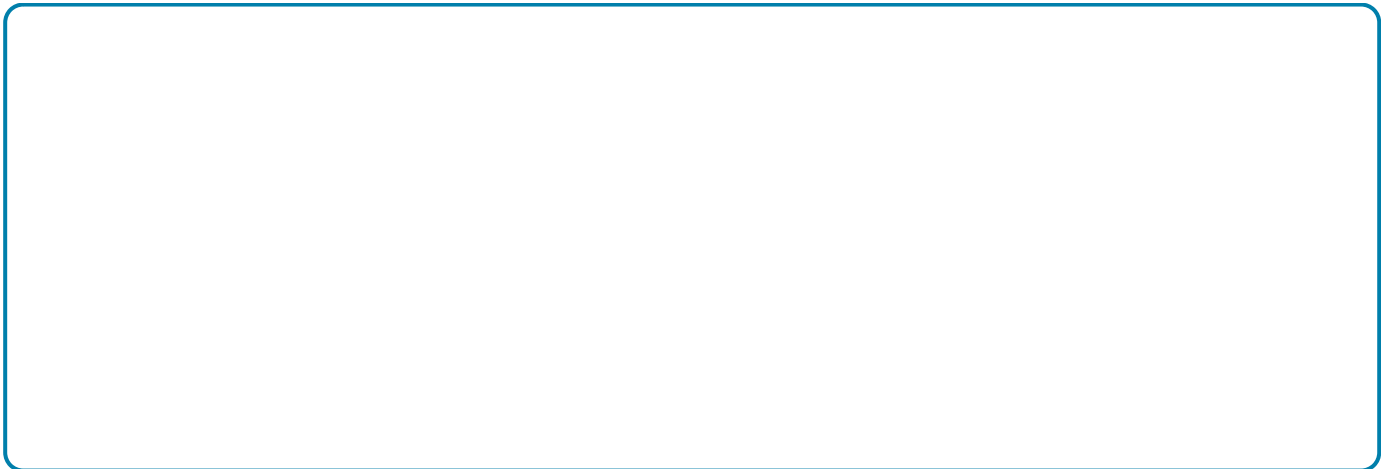



What do these verses say about loving others?

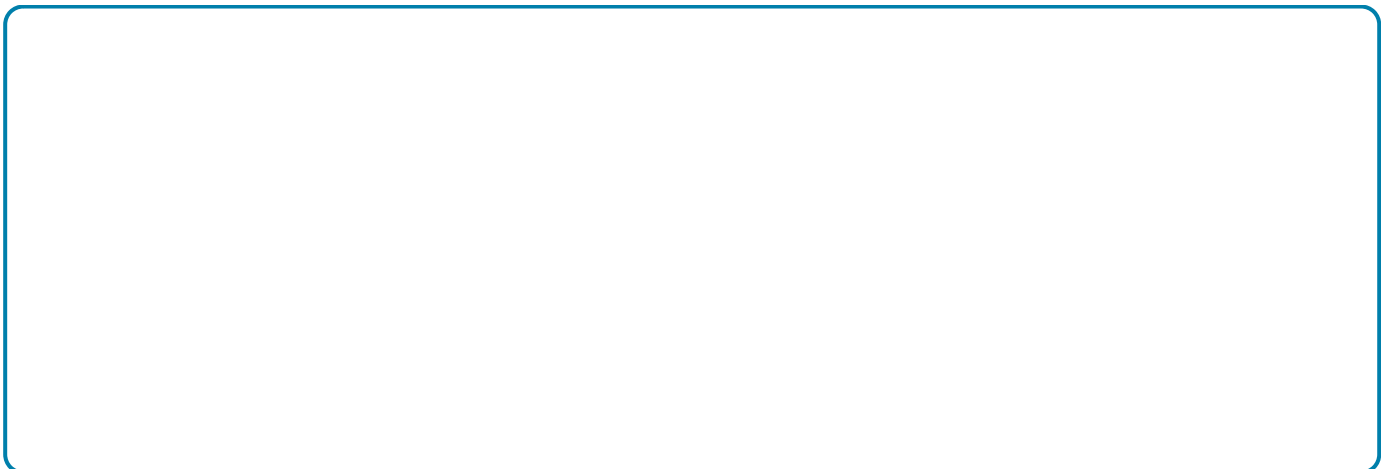

Philippians 2:3




Romans 12:9



I John 13:34



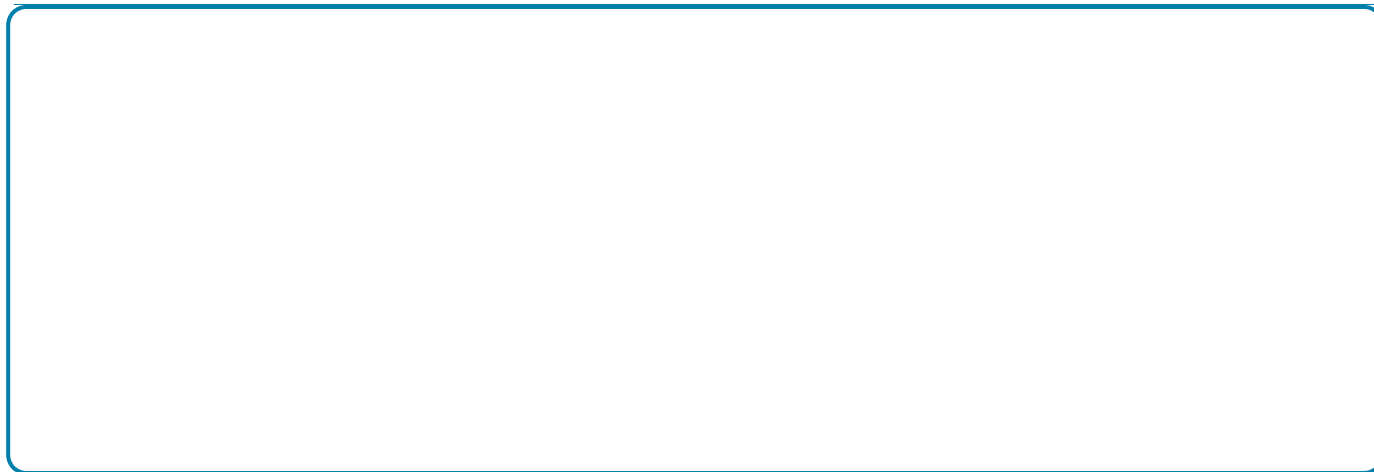


Day 4 - *Forgiven*

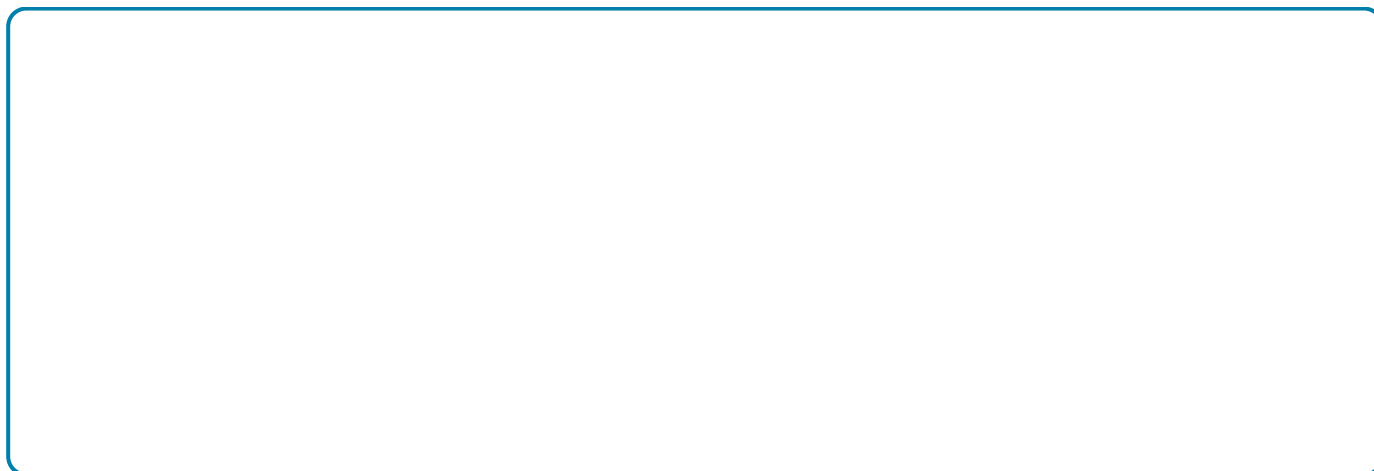
Psalm 51

Use your skills of Observation & Interpretation to answer these questions:

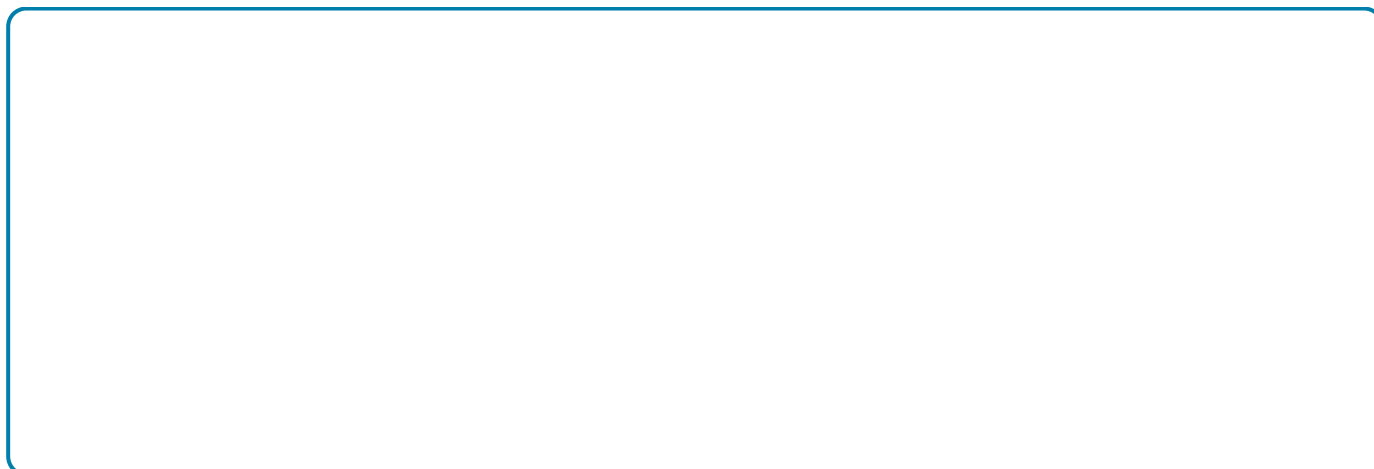
Mark the verbs.....who is doing the action?



What are the repeated phrases?



David, who sinned, wrote this Psalm. Did God love David less because he sinned?






Why do you think David needed to confess this sin?



What is the difference between repentance and being sorry for our sin?









Read the following New Testament verse and note how the concept of forgiveness applies to us today.

Colossians 1:13-14

I John 3:1

I John 4:7













Harboring sin in our life does not remove God's love for us, but it can hinder our ability to fully experience that love. God still loves us (remember Romans 5:8). But we must remember to also confess our sins to stay in a good relationship with Him. Your sin cannot separate you from God, (Romans 8:1) but God has made a way to confess!

Use your skills of Application to answer these questions:

What does God's love have to do with our sin?



What do we need to do in order for our sins to be forgiven? (Look also at 1 John 1:9)?

How can you use confession in your life today as a tool to stay connected to God?



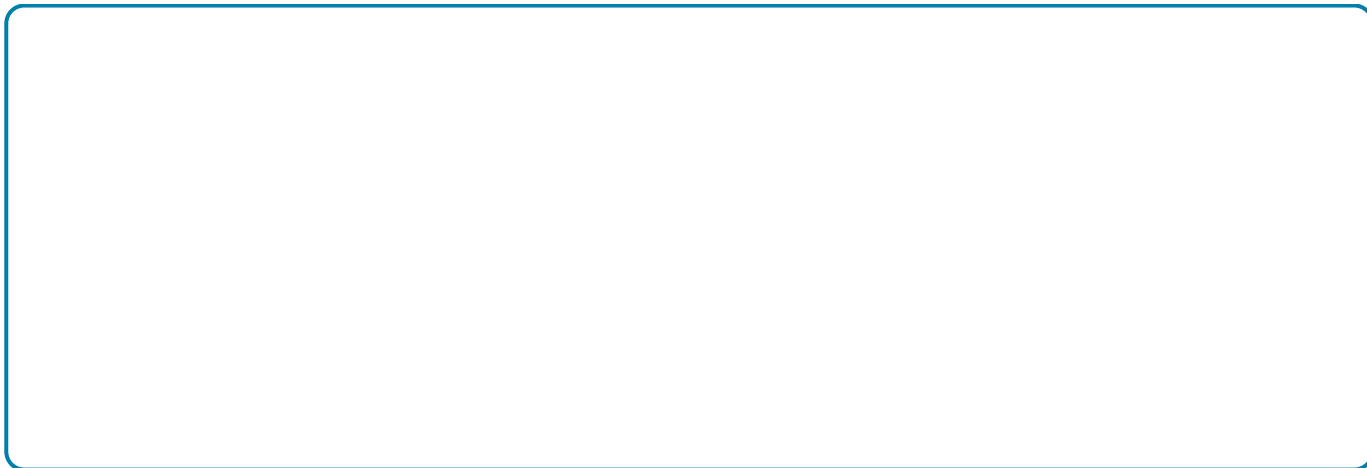
Day 5 - Reflect on the Idea of Living Loved

Spend time today praying, meditating on the following passages, and reflecting on how God's *hesed* love changes your life.

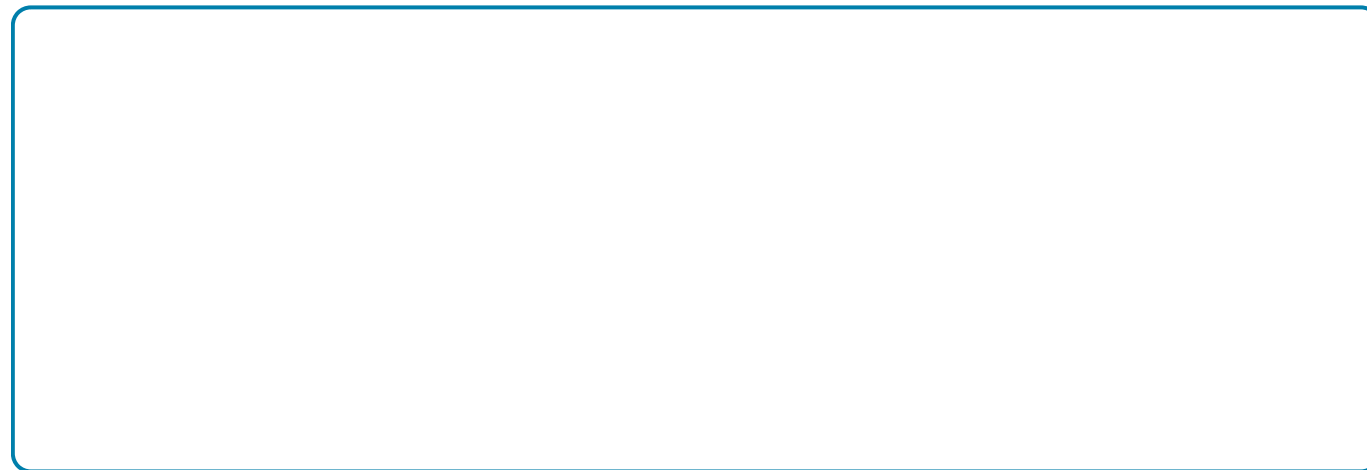

What is one truth you will walk away with this week?

Which of the verses stood out to you the most?

Write it out here.



What is one thing you are going to start to do today because of something you learned this week? Write it out here.



Week 4: How to Do a Word Study

Let's do a Word Study! For the first three weeks we studied the word hesed but I picked the passages for you. How did I know which verses had this word in it? How did I come up with the thoughts and ideas about the word hesed? I did a word study! This is a type of study you can do with any word you want. The skills you learn this week will go with you long after this month. If you want to see this type of study demonstrated on video, make sure to watch this week's video in the Teachable course online.

Day 1:

The first thing to do when doing a word study is to pick a word. How do you do this? There are a couple of ways you could do it.

The first is, you have been reading in your Bible and come across a word you would like to study. For example, during our study last week we looked up Psalm 51. The word "cleanse" is in verse 2. You might want to do a study on what the Old Testament says about "cleanse."

Or, you might have a need in your life. Maybe life feels full of anxiety or fear. A word study on the word "peace" in the Old or New Testament might be a good place to start. Start with these three action steps. Record your answers below.

1. Pray, asking God to give you a word to study. Write out your prayer.
2. Spend some time looking back over your notes from last week's study or previous studies. What stands out to you? Is there a verse that is your favorite or spoke to you in a specific way? Write that verse below.
3. Choose a word from that verse and write it here. This will be your word!

After picking the word you want to study, circle your answer:

Is the word found in the Old Testament or New Testament?

The original words of the Bible were not written in English. Although you could do a word search at BibleGateway.com for your word in an English translation, that would not be as effective. If your word is found in the Old Testament you will be looking at studying a *Hebrew* word. If the word is found in the New Testament, the word will be *Greek*. Don't worry, you don't need to know Greek or Hebrew to do this type of Bible study!

We are going to use the tool BlueLetterBible.org. I will walk you through the steps using this website starting tomorrow. Finish up today finalizing your word and maybe look it up on BlueLetterBible.org.

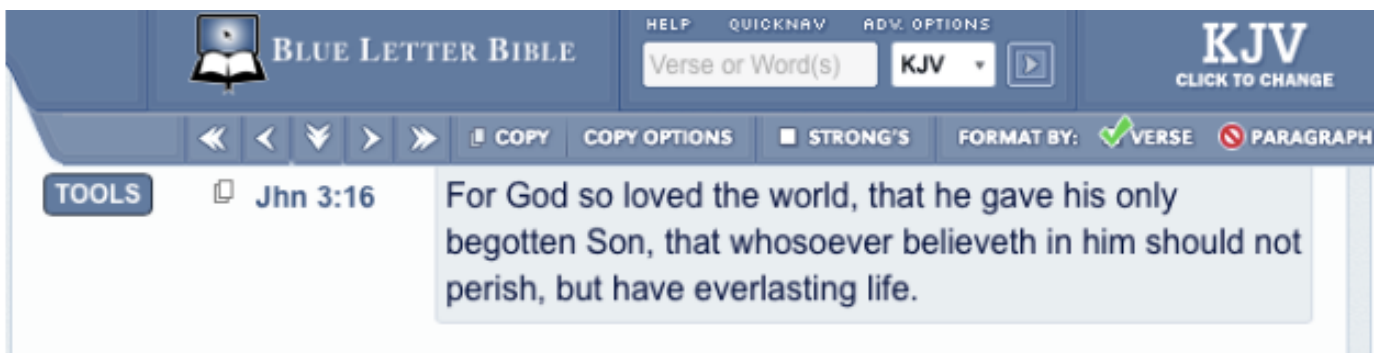
Day 2:

Did you get a chance to look on your computer at the website BlueletterBible.org? If not, take a moment and pull it up on your computer right now. Once you have it pulled up, write your word again at the top of this page as well as the verse this word came from.

Word:

Scripture:

Type your Bible verse reference into BlueletterBible.org's search bar. Next to the sidebar it should say "KJV." This means you are searching in the King James Version of the Bible. If you would like to search in a different translation, you can click the arrow and choose a different translation. Click the green magnifying glass to search. I searched John 3:16 and this is what my screen looked like:




After you search, your verse should be highlighted, but the other verses from that chapter should be there too. Focus on your verse. Click the Bible reference. In my case it says "Jhn 3:16." After you click the specific verse, it should look like this:

A screenshot of the Blue Letter Bible website showing the detailed view of John 3:16. The top navigation bar is the same as the previous screenshot. Below the search bar, there are tabs for 'INTERLINEAR', 'BIBLES', 'CROSS-REFS', 'COMMENTARIES', 'DICTIONARIES', and 'MISC'. The 'Textus Receptus' tab is selected, showing the Greek text of the verse: '3:16 Οὕτως γὰρ ἠγάπησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν κόσμον ὥστε τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ τὸν μονογενῆ ἔδωκεν ἵνα πᾶς ὁ πιστεύων εἰς αὐτὸν μὴ ἀπόληται ἀλλ' ἔχῃ ζωὴν αἰώνιον'. Below the Greek text are buttons for 'Forward', 'Reverse', 'Fwd Inline', and 'Rev Inline'. A table with four columns is shown: 'English (KJV) [?]', 'Strong's', 'Inflected, Root & Transliterated', and 'Parsing'. The first row of the table shows the word 'For' in English, 'G1063' in Strong's, 'γάρ' in the inflected form, and 'CONJ' in the parsing column. The second row shows the word 'θεός' in the inflected form. There is a speaker icon and a 'CONJ' button next to the word 'γάρ'.

As you scroll down you will see each verse is outlined. On the far left is the word in English, the next column is Strong's and will have a number. The other two columns you won't need for this activity.


Strong's is a concordance that includes all of the words in the Bible. The little letter and number correlate to a Greek or Hebrew word. That number is what you want to focus on. Go down to the section of the page that has your word from that verse. My word from John 3:16 is "world." So I scrolled down and saw this:

world,	G2889	κόσμον κόσμος kosmos		N-ASM
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The next thing I am going to do is click on the number, "G2889." After clicking that number, my screen will look like this:

Lexicon :: Strong's G2889 - kosmos
Aa


κόσμος

Transliteration kosmos (Key)	Pronunciation kos'-mos 
Part of Speech masculine noun	Root Word (Etymology) Probably from the base of κομίζω (G2865)

Greek Inflections of κόσμος [?]

mGNT 186x in 4 unique form(s)	TR 187x in 4 unique form(s)	LXX 28x in 6 unique form(s)
κόσμον — 45x κόσμος — 32x	κόσμου — 73x κόσμῳ — 37x	

Dictionary Aids



This page gives me the Greek word for “world.” As I scroll, I can see the outline of how it is used in the Bible, various definitions, and more! I am going to write down the definition of that word in my notes.

Today, I would like you to follow those steps for YOUR word! Here are the steps again. As a reminder, you also have a teaching video that goes over these steps as well.

Open [Blueletterbible.org](https://blueletterbible.org)

Go to the right-hand side and type the reference for your verse in the search box. Search your verse.

Click the Bible reference.

Find your word from the verse and click on the Strong’s number.

After you have completed all of those steps the last thing you will do today is write your scripture reference, word and definition. You can write what is listed there in the Blue Letter Bible site. You can also go [here](#), which is a very popular Bible dictionary.

Write it here:

Scripture:

Word:

Definition:

Easton’s Definition:


Day 3:

Do you have your verses? Do you have your word in English? Do you have your Greek/Hebrew Word? Do you have your definition? Now you are ready to write some other verses down! Go back to the page that has the definition of your word. Review Day 2 if you need a reminder of how to find it.

After seeing this page:

Lexicon :: Strong's G2889 - kosmosAa

κόσμος


Transliteration	Pronunciation
<i>kosmos</i> (Key)	kos'-mos 
Part of Speech	Root Word (Etymology)
masculine noun	Probably from the base of κομίζω (G2865)

Greek Inflections of κόσμος [?]

mGNT 186x in 4 unique form(s)	TR 187x in 4 unique form(s)	LXX 28x in 6 unique form(s)
κόσμον — 45x		κόσμου — 73x
κόσμος — 32x		κόσμῳ — 37x

Scroll to the bottom and find the heading, "Concordance Results Shown Using the KJV." It might say ESV or NKJV. That's ok! Now is the fun part. You are going to write down all of the verses that contain your word! At the top it will say how many times that Greek word is used in both the OT (Old Testament) & NT (New Testament). Next you will see how many times that verse is found. For my word, it says 152 times! As I write down my verses today, I will not write all 152 words.






Instead, I am going to look at each passage listed and only write down the verse references that I'm interested in studying. You do not have to write every passage down, but just maybe 10-20 different verses from a variety of books of the Bible. Don't write just Matthew passages or even



just passages from Paul's letter. If another author like James or Peter used that word, write down those references. Narrow down your list of Bible verses to just 15-20. At least fifteen verses but no more than 20.

Here is a tip: If your word comes from a verse in the New Testament, only write NT verses. If your word comes from an OT verse, only write OT verses.

Now it is your turn. Write down just the references you want to study. You don't have to write the whole verse, but just where to find it in the Bible. Use the following sheet or go to [my sheet](#) and copy the template there!



Day 4:

Although we only have one day to do this, ideally you would spend several days (or weeks) doing this work. You are now going to completely fill in your chart.

CONTEXT

What is the context of each of the verses? Who is speaking? Fill out the second part of your chart from the previous page. Who are they speaking to? Where does this passage take place? What is going on? What happened before and what happens after?

MY THOUGHTS:

While you are doing this, add your thoughts. What stands out? What resonates with you? What questions do you have? Do you see a pattern? Similar definitions?

REFLECTION:

Write down your thoughts.


A	B	C
Scripture Verse	Proverbs 21:21	
Word	righteousness	
Definition	morally right, justice, right	
Easton's definition:	of the law are satisfied in respect c	
Verse	Context	My Thoughts
Genesis 15:6	God's covenant with Abraham - stars of the heaven. God proves it by making a covenant with Abraham. Abraham believed!	Faith leads to righteousness. And God is the one who keeps His promises!
Deuteronomy 9:4-6	Why did God choose Israel? It wasn't because of their faith or even their righteousness? God says not because they were righteous - but because of God's covenant!	We have no righteousness in our own hearts.
1 Samuel 12:7		
2 Samuel 8:15		
Psalms 5:8		



Day 5:

Today is our last day, but you can continue what you started yesterday on your own for the next few days. Make sure to complete the chart before moving on to today's lesson. Although Bible study is great and profitable, we cannot just have a head knowledge of scripture. God wants it to do more than just instruct. We want to connect with God on a deeper, personal level. Ultimately our Bible study should change us. Today I want you to take a look back through the chart you filled out (even if you didn't complete it, take what you did do) and answer these questions:

What does this passage teach you about God?



How does this aspect of God's character change your view of self?

What should you do in response?

What did you learn about this word?

How would you summarize your thoughts?



20 Psalms of God's Love

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PSALM 6:4

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PSALM 17:7

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PSALM 23:6

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PSALM 32:10

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PSALM 25:10

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PSALM 36:5

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PSALM 57:10

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PSALM 40:11

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PSALM 94:18

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PSALM 90:14

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PSALM 89:28

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PSALM 100:5

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PSALM 103:8

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PSALM 145:8

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PSALM 119:41

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PSALM 119:124

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PSALM 143:8

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PSALM 144:2

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PSALM 118

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PSALM 136



About the author:

Sarah Frazer is a wife, mother, and writer who loves to strengthen and encourage the weary mom to connect with God so that she can replace feelings of discouragement, disillusionment, and disappointment with God's daily peace. Sarah is the author of several Bible study resources found on her [website](#). She shares about her life, with her five kids and busy husband (of 17 years) on [Instagram](#).

