

# Weekly Study Guide

The week of January 31, 2016

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## *God Is Trustworthy*

### SOUL TRAINING EXERCISES

#### **Option 1:**

Christian growth takes practice. Nobody runs a marathon on his or her first step out the door. Use these weekly "soul training exercises" to help you practice cooperating with the Holy Spirit so you can hear and walk by the Spirit's leading all throughout your life.

Each day this week, find a moment to read Psalm 27:1-6. Rest in the promises God has offered us—promises we can trust no matter our circumstances. Reflect over your life and recall the blessings God has provided you. Begin by writing a few and add more each day. Perhaps it is your family, friends, clothing, or a home. As you read through your list, ask the questions, "With everything God has provided me, what do I know about God's love for me?" Then, ask God to move in your heart so that you would trust him in all because he has always (and will always) taken care of you.

#### **Option 1 & 2:**

*Regular habits of private Bible reading strengthen our relationship with God and teach us how to follow Jesus. In addition to the thematic exercise above, you can use this guide each week to lead you through relevant sections of the Bible.*

#### **Daily Readings**

##### **MONDAY**

Mark 5:1-20

##### **TUESDAY**

Mark 5:21-43

##### **WEDNESDAY**

Mark 6:1-6a

##### **THURSDAY**

Mark 6:6b-13

##### **FRIDAY**

Mark 6:14-29

##### **SATURDAY**

Mark 6:30-44

# Group Discussion

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## CONNECT

How can someone earn your trust? Name a time you had to trust someone other than yourself in order to come out of a challenging time.

## THIS WEEK'S LEARNING GOAL

God has always (and will always) cared for us. We are learning to trust our heavenly Father, even in difficult circumstances.

## LEARNING FROM THE BIBLE TOGETHER

Just before he was handed over to be arrested Jesus prayed to his father, knowing he would soon be physically tortured and painfully executed. In this moment—the worst of circumstances—Christ chooses to trust God. **Read Matthew 26:36-39** as a group. For more details of the account, see **Mark 14:32-35** and **Luke 22:39-44**.

- How is Jesus feeling in the moments leading up to his betrayal?
- Jesus asks, if it were possible, that God would take “this cup”—serving as the sacrifice for the sake of the world—but above all, he trusts his Father’s will. What is your “cup”? In other words, what aspects of your life make it difficult to trust God?
- Why do you think Jesus is able to trust his Father?
- How has God shown you that you can trust him in all circumstances?

When we think about trusting God, it is tempting to simply ask for a few favors and say thanks when things go our way. Scripture, though, tells us that really trusting God means going deeper. **Read Proverbs 3:5-10** as a group.

- According to verses 5, 6, and 7, what does it mean to trust God with all our heart?
- What does it mean to “lean not on your own understanding?” What does it mean to, “in all your ways acknowledge him?”

# Group Discussion (cont.)

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- What circumstances in life make it difficult for you to lean on God rather than your own understanding? Have you had any experiences in which your understanding failed you?
  
- According to the passage, what is the result of trusting God? How have you seen this in your life?

In Proverbs 3:9-10, the author offers an example that his audience can use to trust God. As a group, come up with some practical ways you can trust God. Think about your relationships, health, career, finances, etc. Apply these throughout the week, and pay attention to the challenges trusting in God presents, but also notice the peace it brings. Write these down to discuss with your group for next week.

## SOUL TRAINING EXERCISES

As a group, recall last week's soul training exercise. Did you learn or experience anything you'd like to share with your group? Now, look at the soul training exercises on the front of this study guide and get ready to practice them this week. Is there a particular time of day or some other specific commitment that would help you succeed in doing these exercises?

## PRAY

Share your prayer concerns with one another. In addition, in your prayers today, offer your trust to God in all circumstances and rest in the peace he is offering you.

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