

SPRING 2026

YOUTH



GOD IS:
UNDERSTANDING THE
CHARACTER OF GOD

+ + +

SEIZE THE DAY:
EMBRACING A MISSION
WITH PURPOSE

A PROMISE THAT WILL NEVER BE BROKEN

+ + +

It hurts when people break a promise. Some people make promises they have no intention of honoring. Others sincerely mean well, but circumstances interfere and they're unable to do what they said they promised they'd do.

God is not like us. When He makes a promise, He keeps it. Period. He is always faithful to His word. For example, He promises an abundant and eternal life to those who trust in His Son, Jesus Christ.

"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.... For everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved" (Rom. 10:9,13).

But we don't automatically enjoy the benefits of this wonderful promise. We must understand and believe Jesus died on the cross, taking our sin upon Himself, and then rose from the dead, making a new, eternal life possible for us. As we believe, we also acknowledge His lordship, turning from sin and surrendering our lives to Him.

God's promise is for you. If you would like a new life in Christ, repent of your sins and put your faith in Him. Admit to God you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you. Turn from the sin that has kept you from God and accept Jesus's gift of forgiveness. Confess your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Express your repentance and faith by praying something like this:

"Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I ask You to forgive me. I now accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for Your love, forgiveness, and a new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus' name, Amen."

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in faith. Be baptized as an expression of your faith.

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ON THE COVER

Stefany made the decision to give her life to Christ at the age of 5 years old with the guidance of her babysitter. This was the *kairos* moment that catapulted her into a lifelong journey with Jesus and the church. When Stefany's family first joined East End Baptist Church in Suffolk, VA, she was captivated by the worship. Most specifically, she was drawn to the choir. From singing in church Christmas plays, to taking her first set of voice lessons through the Jubal Arts Center at East End; the church played a vital role in shaping Stefany's musical and, ultimately, her ministerial gifts.

Today, Stefany holds a bachelor's in music with a concentration in voice as well as a bachelor's in psychology from the University of North Carolina Greensboro. She is currently working toward her Master of Counseling degree at Dallas Theological Seminary. Stefany is passionate about using her gifts and talents to walk alongside teens and young adults as they work through marrying life and loving Christ. It's one of the reasons she enjoys the YOU Bible Study curriculum. It is packed full of theologically sound lessons, testimonials, thought-provoking questions, and it is all done with the African American demographic in mind. For a group that often feels overlooked and under-appreciated, the YOU curriculum helps them to feel **seen**.



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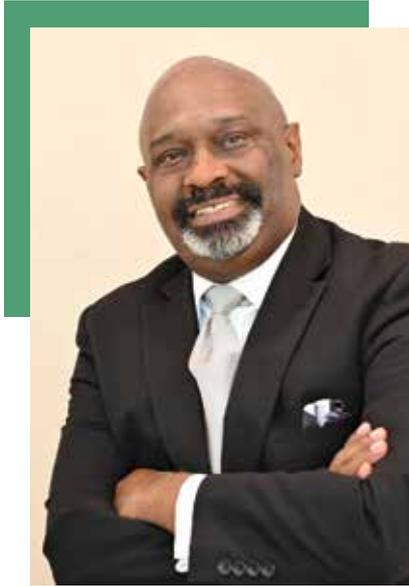
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EDITORIAL

MARK CROSTON

One of the great purposes of true Bible Study is to learn about God, who He is; what He has done; and what He wants to do through our lives to work out His divine plan for His creation. Unfortunately, too often I hear many “bible studies” and sermons that are more “us-centered” than God-centered. There is more about what we can get from God, less about who God is. The more we can focus on learning about God, the less we will need to worry about what we can get from Him. A beautiful hymn says, Turn your eyes upon Jesus, Look full in His wonderful face, And the things of earth will grow strangely dim, in the light of His glory and grace.

This issue of the YOU Bible Study will dig into the Bible about knowing God. We will be studying God Is: Understanding the Character of God; Seize the Day: Embracing a Mission with Purpose and Don't Forget to Remember. In addition to these studies, get extra insights and teaching tips from our **YOU Blog at you.lifeway.com** and listen to our Lifeway YOU Podcast on your favorite podcast app.

The **Black Church Leadership and Family Conference** is right around the corner. There is a full program for every member of the family! Join us for this cost efficient, all-in-one, equipping and energizing week for all generations, **July 20 through 24, 2026**. I'm sure this year will be just the time of relaxation, refreshment, and rejuvenation we need.

Learn more at lifeway.com/blackchurchconference.

Thanks for joining me in this season of study. Now grab your Bible because you never know how God will speak through YOU!

Be Blessed!

Dr. Mark A. Croston, Sr.

YOU General Editor

National Director of Black Church Ministries

lifeway.com/BlackChurchLife

GETTING THE MOST OUT OF YOU

YOU is a three-in-one learner and leader resource with inspirational and educational features to enhance Bible study that leads to spiritual maturity and life change. Here is information to help you get the most out of *YOU*.

LEARNER PAGES

The first half of *YOU* includes pages for personal study. These should be read by the learner and leader prior to group time. Included in each session:

Memory Verses encourage filling the mind with the Word of God to strengthen every aspect of spiritual life.

Keywords identify and define words or phrases to add clarity to the biblical text.

Digging Deeper provides a deeper look at a word, character, or other aspect from the session.

Did You Know? provides an urban or African-American cultural or historical fact or update connected to the session.

Live It sums up the session and offers applications points to challenge daily living.

DAILY READINGS

Included with each session are five devotionals to be read by the learner and leader. The benefits of a daily devotion are innumerable. Their primary purpose in this resource is to focus attention on the biblical content of each session for application of and conformity to the Word of God.

LEADER PAGES

The second half of *YOU* includes pages to guide the teaching of each session. Leaders can use the leader pages to guide learners through the passage and its key emphases as detailed on the learner pages. Here are suggestions on how to teach:

- Prior to the session, read and study the Bible passage, keywords, and learner pages.
- Plan teaching using the leader pages. Keep in mind that because of time, it may not be possible to use every teaching suggestion. Also the teaching suggestions are in sequential order for easy use.
- Features to use when teaching include: The Point, which is readily recognizable on the learner and leader pages; The Question at the top of the first page of each learner session; Keywords on the Scripture pages; "Digging Deeper"; "Did You Know?"; Pack Items* (see next page); "Object Lessons"; and Commentary at the end of each session on leader pages.
- Refine your teaching plans when necessary.

Get more teaching help at you.lifeway.com.

PRAY

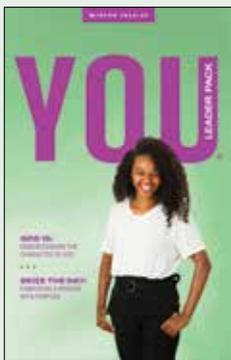
Because the Holy Spirit is the guide for your study, invite Him to show you how to "rightly divide the word of truth" as you teach your group. Read the Bible passage several times, asking the Holy Spirit to show you its meaning and application.



FOR THOSE WHO WANT TO GO DEEPER



The **Advanced Bible Study** is written for group members who desire more extensive commentary. It includes exposition of each session's Scripture passage, an examination of keywords, an introduction to the setting of the passage and biblical life and times, questions to guide the study, and interactive responses to help readers apply God's truths to their lives today.



The **YOU Leader Pack** is a collection of teaching aids designed to help leaders provide a visual and interactive experience for learners. Each pack contains posters, charts, maps, and handouts that can add another layer to teaching and engender needed variety that makes learning more interesting.

The **YOU Leader Pack** is located at lifeway.com/YOU



YOU podcasts provide a candid overview of each YOU Bible Study session. General editor Mark Croston and content editor Natasha Menifee casually discuss each biblical topic from an urban perspective with a strong theological and biblical emphasis. The intent of these podcasts is to provide listeners with a time-efficient overview of each session and creative tips for study group leaders.



Social Media: Connect with a community of **YOU** users.

- Post responses to questions, share teaching ideas at **Facebook.com/YOUBibleStudy**
- Learn more about **YOU** and link to great blog content at **YOU.lifeway.com**
- Shop **YOU** at **www.lifeway.com/YOU**

YOU DISCIPLESHIP PLAN

The Pathway of Discipleship

Growing in Christ is a journey—a lifelong journey—but what does that look like? Lifeway’s research reveals eight markers consistently present in the lives of believers who are growing spiritually. Each year, the YOU Bible Study engages all eight of these areas. Following this intentional plan for discipleship ensures progress on the pathway to becoming more like Christ.

Visit www.lifeway.com/you for a fuller picture of this discipleship plan through 2026.

8 SIGNPOSTS	Spring 2026	Summer 2026	Fall 2026	Winter 2026 -27
Seek God	God Is: Understanding the Character of God			
Live Unashamed	Seize the Day: Embracing a Mission with Purpose			
Build Relationships		Connecting with Others Like Jesus Did		
Serve God and Others		Essentials for Christian Living		
Obey God & Deny Self			How God Speaks	
Share Christ			The Beauty of Forgiveness	
Engage with Scripture				Jesus, God with Us
Exercise Faith				The Lifestyle of a Witness

GOD IS: UNDERSTANDING THE CHARACTER OF GOD

INTRODUCTION

+ + +

Seek God.

A growing disciple wants to know God intimately and fully. Seeking God is possible because God has revealed Himself to us, and what is revealed in Scripture motivates us to seek Him even more.

Writer Bio

James Jackson

pastors Glynwood Baptist Church, in Prattville, Alabama. He is married to Trish, who works as the NextGen consultant for the Alabama Women's Missionary Union. Together they have two grown sons, a grandson, two cats, and a very large dog.

Valerie Burton

adapted the Learner Pages for the YOU audience. She is a writer, public speaker, and serves as assistant director in the Sunday School ministry at Franklin Avenue Baptist Church, New Orleans, LA. Her passion is Bible literacy and making the Word of God a reality in believer's lives.

Jackie Blackwell

wrote the Daily Readings for this study. She is also actively involved in ministry at Little Zion Baptist Church in Smithfield, Virginia, where she serves alongside her husband, Dr. Melvin T. Blackwell, Senior Pastor. Together, they are the proud parents of four adult children: Alexandria, Melvin II, Marcus, and Nijeria.



A STUDY ON UNDERSTANDING THE CHARACTER OF GOD

+ + +

On our own, human beings really don't have a big enough brain to understand anything about who God is or what God is like. Left to our own devices, humans could easily make God in our own image and make Him into the kind of God we want.

That's where grace comes in.

God's grace is such that He makes Himself known. Scripture teaches us that "what can be known about God is evident among them, because God has shown it to them" (Rom. 1:19).

God isn't playing hide and seek with us. He has revealed His attributes (a word that just means "what God is like") in two ways.

The first is through what He has made. But that knowledge is also limited. We can't have a relationship with God simply by observing nature.

That's why God reveals His character not just by what He made, but also by what He wrote. He has

given us the Bible, and the Bible is filled cover to cover with information about who God is, what God loves, what God hates, and what God's like.

In these next seven sessions, we will explore God's attributes as they are revealed in His Word.

*Holy
Love
Just
Omnipotent
Faithful
Life-Giving
Eternal*

However, let me give you a word of warning, this study isn't just information, **it's transformation.**

This study should transform the way you think, talk and act. Once you really understand who God is, you will never be the same. "Therefore, be imitators of God, as dearly loved children" (Eph. 5:1).

SESSION 1

GOD IS HOLY

Leader pages on pp. 102-105

THE POINT:
GOD IS SET APART FROM
EVERYTHING ELSE AND
DESERVES OUR WORSHIP.

PSALM 99:1-9

¹ The LORD reigns! Let the peoples tremble. He is enthroned between the cherubim. Let the earth quake.

² The LORD is great in Zion; he is exalted above all the peoples.

³ Let them praise your great and awe-inspiring name. He is holy.

.....
⁴ The mighty King loves justice. You have established fairness; you have administered justice and righteousness in Jacob.

⁵ Exalt the LORD our God; bow in worship at his footstool. He is holy.

.....
⁶ Moses and Aaron were among his priests; Samuel also was among those calling on his name. They called to the LORD and he answered them.

⁷ He spoke to them in a pillar of cloud; they kept his decrees and the statutes he gave them.

⁸ LORD our God, you answered them. You were a forgiving God to them, but an avenger of their sinful actions.

⁹ **Exalt the LORD our God; bow in worship at his holy mountain, for the LORD our God is holy.**

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MEMORY VERSE

KEYWORDS

Cherubim (v. 1)—A “cherub” was a winged angel who functioned primarily as a guard. “Cherubim” is the plural form of cherub.

Holy (v. 5)—Verses 1-3, mention the greatness of God and His awe-inspiring name. In verses 4-5, the holiness of God describes His sovereign reign characterized by justice,

fairness, and righteousness. God is holy in His character and in His actions.

Holy Mountain (v. 9)—Most certainly this is a reference to the temple, based upon the earlier reference to Zion (v. 2). Worshipers had an invitation to worship at God’s holy temple, surrendering to His sovereignty.

WHAT SHOULD BELIEVERS UNDERSTAND ABOUT GOD'S HOLINESS?

When my wife and I got married, we had two categories of dishes on our gift registry: everyday dishes and fine china place settings. Thirty-three years later, we continue to use our everyday dishes, well, every day. But the fine china sits on the top shelf. It is only for special occasions. Our wedding china has a pattern they don't even make anymore, so we must be very careful not to break it. The wedding silver has its own special wooden case. It is set apart.

I can't remember the last time we used our wedding china. In fact, I'm not even sure what the pattern looks like. Still, there it sits on the top shelf just in case the president drops by.

The paradox with God is that He is to be set apart like fine china, but He is anything but fragile. He is more precious than the finest silver, but He expects us to involve Him in our everyday lives. He doesn't want to only be present at special occasions; He wants to be there for every meal.

God Is Set Apart in His Greatness // Psalm 99:1-3

While many of the psalms indicate who wrote them, Psalm 99 is not one of them. Nor can we say with certainty the original setting for it. We have some clues, though. The references to Zion (v. 2) and to worshiping God at "His holy mountain" (v. 9) suggest that this psalm was intended to be used in worship at the temple in Jerusalem. Notice that even though God is great in Zion (another name for Jerusalem), He is exalted over all peoples. He does not have limited jurisdiction, and His worship can't be contained to one specific place. In fact, God Himself can't be contained.

This reminds me of the prophet Isaiah, who was an eyewitness to the greatness of God: "He saw the LORD seated on a high and lofty throne, and the hem of His robe filled the temple. Seraphim were standing above Him. And one called to another:

Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of Armies; His glory fills the whole earth" (Isa. 6:1-3).

In our culture, we need to have a reminder that we are meant to tremble before the Lord. In fact, the peoples of the earth are commanded to tremble (v. 1). In the Old Testament, trembling was usually in response to God's wrath. But in this psalm, it has more to do with awe in the face of God's sovereignty ("the LORD reigns"). In either case, we dare not approach Him indifferently or flippantly.



THE POINT: GOD IS SET APART FROM EVERYTHING ELSE AND DESERVES OUR WORSHIP.

When the psalmist described the Lord enthroned between the cherubim, the very earth was commanded to quake.

Along with fear and trembling, the statement “the LORD reigns” should also fill us with peace and confidence. God’s sovereignty is absolute, and no matter how chaotic and out of control the world may seem, God is still on His throne, and the Lord still reigns.

Cherubim were mighty angelic beings. Valentine’s Day cards really get it wrong in their depictions of cherubim. They are not cute and cuddly “baby angels,” armed only with a bow and arrows with heart-shaped tips. On the contrary, the cherubim charged with guarding the entrance to the garden of Eden were armed with “the flaming, whirling sword” (Gen. 3:24).

Translations vary as to the position of God’s throne relative to the cherubim. Some say He is between the cherubim. Others say above or upon. Upon is consistent with the vision Ezekiel had of God seated on His throne and supported by cherubim. Whichever direction the cherubim moved, the throne moved with them (Ezek. 1:26). This reemphasizes the idea that God’s greatness and majesty can’t be confined to a single geographic location!

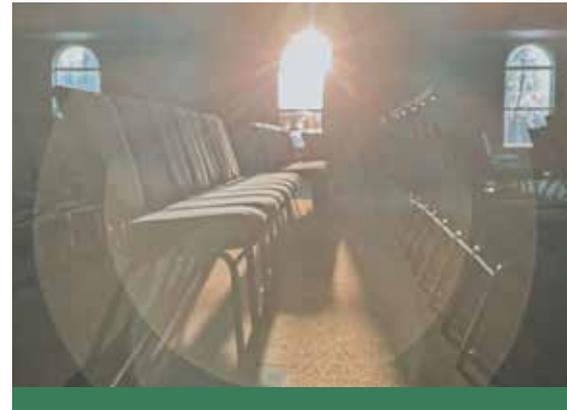
There are two theological concepts we need to know to help us grasp Psalm 99. The first is transcendence. The second is immanence, but we’ll talk about that one in verses 6–9. What is transcendence? It is the “set apartness” of God. It’s the idea that God is above and beyond the created world. He exists outside of space and time, He is wholly other from creation, and His ways are beyond human understanding. Transcendence focuses on God’s sovereignty (v. 1) and greatness (v. 3). Another word for transcendence is holiness. Verse 3 is the first of four times Psalm 99 uses the word “holy” (vv. 3, 5, 9).

How are we to respond to God’s holiness? First, we respond with reverent, respectful, humble fear: “Let the peoples tremble” (v. 1). Second, we respond with glad and joyful praise and worship: “Let them praise Your great and awe-inspiring name” (v. 3). The greatness of God both deserves and demands awestruck wonder.

WHEN HAVE YOU BEEN AWED BY THE GREATNESS OF GOD?

God Is Set Apart in His Justice // Psalm 99:4-5

Much has been said in the past few years about the justice system in the United States of America. We often hear questions raised about whether anyone is above the law. Is there a multi-tiered justice system in which one person is punished less severely (or not at all) than another person convicted of the same crime? Has the justice system been used as a tool of political retribution?



DIGGING DEEPER ACCESS TO THE THRONE

Psalm 99 is the sixth of the enthronement psalms, also known as the royal psalms. Psalms 93 and 95–100 were written to magnify the sovereign rule of God. Like Psalms 93 and 97, Psalm 99 opens with “The LORD reigns.” It describes God’s throne as: an exalted throne, a just throne, and a gracious throne. In the Old Testament, no one could approach God’s throne. Only the high priest could go into the holy place once a year and mediate between the Lord and His people. Today, Jesus Christ is our mediator (1 Tim. 2:5). Access to God’s throne is available to His children through Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:19–25). To the lost sinner, God’s throne is a place of judgment. To the believer, it is a throne of grace (Heb. 4:14–16). God not only invites believers to approach His throne but to do it with confidence. This confidence should filter through reverence and humility. Our confidence rests fully in our position in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:22).

What can keep us from confidently drawing near to God?



Regardless of how you answer these questions, the fact that we are asking them in the first place shows that two things are certain. First, we all want justice and fairness, or at least we think we do. Second, we don't always see justice served, or at least we think we don't.

Another translation of verse 4 is "The might of a king is his love of justice."¹ In other words, a love of justice is what makes a king mighty in the first place.

This is how we know verse 4 refers to God and not a human king. Throughout history, human kings have been notorious for abusing their authority to suit their own self-interest. The Bible, particularly 2 Kings, is filled with stories of kings who manipulated, oppressed, enslaved, and even slaughtered whoever got in the way of what they wanted, even if it was a citizen of their own kingdom.

We humans long for justice and fairness. If you doubt that, the next time you are on a road trip count how many billboards for lawyers you pass in an hour! But do we really want justice and fairness when it comes to our own sin? The Bible shows us that the just penalty for our sins is death (Rom. 6:23). But God in His mercy does not deal "with us as our sins deserve" (Ps. 103:10). Instead, He sent His one and only Son to pay the penalty for our sins. Was that just? Yes! The penalty was paid. Jesus paid the debt we could never pay. But was that fair, that we didn't have to pay for our sins? No. Praise God, we are the beneficiaries of His grace and mercy.

HOW IS GOD'S JUSTICE DIFFERENT FROM EARTHLY JUSTICE?

What is our response to God's justice and mercy? The only proper response is to "exalt the LORD our God; bow in worship at his footstool" (v. 5). We kneel. We bow in humility. There is no other appropriate posture when we encounter God's sovereignty, His justice, and His righteousness.

God Is Set Apart in His Actions // Psalm 99:6-9

In verses 1–3, we talked about how God is transcendent. He is set apart, over and above all creation. Yet God is also immanent. Immanence refers to God's closeness and presence within His creation. It emphasizes that He is actively involved in the world and in the lives of individuals.

In verses 6–9, the psalmist identified three examples of people who "called to the LORD, and He answered them" (v. 6). All three were mediators between God and human beings. They interceded with Him on behalf of the people—Moses as the deliverer of the Exodus, Aaron as the first Levitical priest, and Samuel as the first prophet.

During the Exodus, the children of Israel had a constant visual reminder of God's immanence. God "spoke to them in a pillar of cloud" by day (v. 7) and led them with a pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21). There was never a time, day or night, when the people were not assured of His presence. In the Gospels, Jesus Himself is the visible manifestation of God's presence. Matthew 1:22–23 reminds us that one of the names of Jesus is Immanuel, which means "God with us." Immanent and Immanuel come from the same root word.

Verses 7–8 may seem to be in conflict, if not contradictory. Verse 7 says God spoke to those who "kept His decrees and the statutes He gave them." Obedience is a prerequisite for hearing God speak. But verse 8 says that He was "an avenger of their sinful actions." There is no contradiction here. Instead, this is a clear picture of how God interacts with His people. Because He is actively involved in the world and in the lives of individuals, He can and does punish sin. Remember that God loves justice. Even those in Scripture who spoke with Him face

THE POINT: GOD IS SET APART FROM EVERYTHING ELSE AND DESERVES OUR WORSHIP.

to face had to deal with the consequences of their sinful actions. The clearest example is when Moses and Aaron failed to obey His instructions and honor His holiness. As a result, they were kept from entering the promised land (Num. 20:1–13).

Still, the psalmist described God as “a forgiving God to them” (v. 8). His discipline is a sign of His love for us, not the absence of it. Every loving parent will discipline a child who is doing something that could harm themselves or others, and God, the most perfect Parent of all, is no exception. When we confess and repent, He will always forgive our sin, even if He does not reverse the consequences our sin sets in motion. In Christ, we see both God’s punishment of sin and His forgiveness of sinners.

Verse 9 is nearly identical to verse 5, with a call to exalt and worship the Lord while acknowledging His holiness. In verse 5, we worship at His “footstool” in humility. In verse 9, however, we are invited to worship at His “holy mountain.” Just as He invited Moses to come up to Him (Ex. 19:20), He invites us. Through Jesus, God has made Himself accessible to us. He is transcendent, but He is also immanent. Hallelujah!

IN WHAT WAYS DO GOD’S ACTIONS LEAD YOU TO RESPOND IN WORSHIP?

DID YOU KNOW?

“Come as you are, but in Christ you can’t stay as you are” is a popular phrase used in many Christian churches as a welcoming invitation to worship with believers in Christ. The phrase is meant to debunk the lie that you must “get yourself together” before you come to Christ. The truth is, Jesus knows our sinful nature: “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). Jesus willingly gave His life and rose from the dead so that we may have a relationship with our holy Father.

God is holy, and His holiness affects every aspect of His nature. Because He is holy, He expects His children to be holy (1 Pet. 1:16). We cannot stay as we are. God knows we cannot obey this command in our own strength. So, He fills us with His Holy Spirit, who enables us to be transformed into His likeness.

Biblical Truth: “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession . . .” (1 Pet. 2:9).

How will knowing God chose you to be holy impact your daily living?

LIVE IT

How can you cultivate a heart of worship that reflects reverence and confidence in who God is?

Who can be compared to our God? God is completely distinct from all of His creation, and every attribute He possesses is rooted in holiness. Yet, He is willing to dwell with His people and extend His grace to us. He invites us to draw near so He can receive our worship. Here are some ways to draw near to the holy God this week:

+ + +

- **Praise.** This week, tune out the podcasts, talk radio, and your favorite oldies, and make a playlist of songs that emphasize the holiness of God. When you’re stuck in traffic or doing chores, praise Him! Remember, God is set apart, but He is also right there with you.
- **Obey.** Are you living some area of your life in disobedience to God? Confess it and repent, and trust you’ll hear God’s voice more clearly.
- **Intercede.** Just as Moses, Aaron, and Samuel were intercessors between God and man, pray this week for your lost friends and family.

DAILY READINGS

1. EXALTED! // PSALM 99:1-5

The holiness of God stands exalted as the center of His divine essence, humbling you with the weight of your weakness and filling you with awe at His matchless beauty. His complete sinlessness reveals both your need for grace and the hope that He can transform your broken heart into something beautiful. Because this holy God passionately loves justice, He is actively working to make all things right in your life. Understanding His holiness draws you closer to Him.

The God who is too pure to compromise is also too loving to forsake or leave you.

2. I EXALT THEE IS MY TESTIMONY // PSALM 99:6-7

Be encouraged, believer, for the holy God, exalted above all creation in endless majesty, gives ear with loving compassion to hear your every cry. His excellent holiness doesn't create distance—it draws you into deeper intimacy with Him. From His throne of glory, the sovereign Lord shows that your prayers matter deeply—not because you are worthy, but because His holiness makes Him perfectly faithful to His covenant love. As you grasp that the same God worshiped by angels is personally involved and invested in your daily struggles and joys, you understand both His brilliant greatness and your valued place as His beloved child.

God is holy in character and will respond with perfect wisdom and love.

3. RESPONSE AND REVERENCE // PSALM 99:8-9

God's holiness reveals itself most profoundly in His ways of forgiveness—where His perfect purity becomes the very pathway through which your guilt is cleansed. His holiness isn't a barrier to your relationship; it's the basis of it. This same holy God who offers you grace also judges misconduct with justice, proving that His forgiveness isn't just permission but His grace secured through the cross. From His exalted throne, where you are invited to approach boldly, you encounter

something beautiful and amazing—the God whose holiness should grip you with fear has made a way for intimate communion. This understanding draws you closer to Him for response and reverence, knowing that His justice was satisfied not by your punishment but by His own sacrifice.

Oh, come, let us worship Him!

4. OBEDIENT LOVE // JOHN 15:9-11

When you are connected to God's love and joy through obedience, submission becomes a pathway—not a burden—to experiencing His deepest affections. Obedience becomes the conduit through which His love flows freely into your life, transforming duty into delight as you align with His heart and receive His abundant joy. As you choose to trust and obey, even in difficulty, you deepen your understanding of both His character and your identity. You are not just a servant following orders but a beloved child learning to walk in harmony with your Father's perfect will. Obedient love means discovering that God's commands are not restrictions but invitations into the fullness of His love and the completeness of His joy.

To know Him, is to love and trust Him.

5. PROVING LOVE // JOHN 15:12

God's love isn't just an emotion—it's a powerful, active force that moves, serves, and expresses care in tangible ways. It proves itself by doing, not simply feeling. The same love that led God to give His Son now lives within you, seeking expression through kindness, service, and sacrifice. As you recognize this stirring in your heart, you begin to understand: you're not just a recipient of divine love—you're a vessel through which it flows. Your identity is both deeply loved and naturally loving. Growing closer to God means allowing His love to shape your actions, reflect through your words, and move through your hands and heart.

God's love doesn't lie dormant; it transforms you and reaches others through you.