

A woman with blonde hair, wearing sunglasses and a red patterned sweater, is sitting cross-legged on a grassy forest floor. She is looking upwards with a serene expression. The background is a dense forest of tall, thin trees with light-colored bark, possibly birches, under a soft, hazy sky. The image is framed by dark, vertical bars on the left and right sides.

A STUDY GUIDE ON A PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

DRAW NEAR TO GOD

A PUBLICATION OF RAY REYNOLDS RAP

BIBLE STUDY GUIDE
Prepared by Ray Reynolds Ph.D.

A Study Guide of a Personal Relationship With God

Ray Reynolds Rap Publications

“Draw near to God and He will draw near to you.” James 4:8 (NKJV)

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Lesson #1 – Drawing Near To God Through Baptism

I. BAPTISM IS ESSENTIAL FOR SALVATION

- A. How can we know baptism is essential (**Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1-6**)?
- B. How can we know baptism involves much water (**Acts 8:36, 10:47, John 3:23**)?
- C. How can we know baptism involves going into water and coming up (**Acts 8:36-39, Matthew 3:5-6**)?
- D. How can we know baptism involves a burial (**Romans 6:3-5, Colossians 2:12**)?
- E. How can we know baptism involves a planting (**Romans 6:5**)?
- F. How can we know baptism involves washing (**Acts 22:16, Ephesians 5:26, Titus 3:5, Hebrews 10:22**)?
- G. How can we know baptism involves a birth (**John 3:3-5, 1 Peter 1:22-25**)?
- H. How can we know baptism involves a resurrection (**Acts 8:39, Romans 6:1-4, Colossians 2:12**)?

II. BAPTISM IS HOW WE BEGIN OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- A. What can we learn from the baptism of about 3,000 on Pentecost (**Acts 2**)?
- B. What can we learn from the baptism of the Samaritans (**Acts 8**)?
- C. What can we learn from the baptism of the Simon the Magician (**Acts 8**)?
- D. What can we learn from the baptism of the Ethiopian Eunuch (**Acts 8**)?
- E. What can we learn from the baptism of Saul of Tarsus (**Acts 9, 22, 26**)?
- F. What can we learn from the baptism of Cornelius & his household (**Acts 10-11**)?
- G. What can we learn from the baptism of Lydia & her household (**Acts 16**)?
- H. What can we learn from the baptism of the Philippian Jailor & his household (**Acts 16**)?
- I. What can we learn from the baptism of the Corinthians (**Acts 18**)?
- J. What can we learn from the baptism of the Ephesians (**Acts 19**)?

III. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF BAPTISM

- A. What will happen if we refuse baptism?
- B. How can being baptized begin our relationship with God?
- C. Who should be baptized? Why?
- D. Why do some religious groups refuse to teach or practice baptism?

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Lesson #2 - Drawing Near To God Through Blessings

I. GOD IS OUR HEAVENLY FATHER - Matthew 6:9, 23:37, I John 3:1

- A. What are some of the blessings we receive as a result of God being our Father?
- B. What are some of the privileges we enjoy as a result of these blessings?
- C. What responsibilities do we have as God's children because of these blessings?

II. JESUS CHRIST IS OUR LORD AND HIGH PRIEST - I Corinthians 8:6, Hebrews 4:14

- A. What are some of the blessings we receive as a result of Jesus being our High Priest?
- B. What are some of the privileges we enjoy as a result of Jesus being our High Priest?
- C. What responsibilities do we have as a result of Jesus being our High Priest?

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT PERSONALLY DWELLS IN US - Acts 2:38-39, I Corinthians 3:16

- A. What are some of the blessings we receive as a result of the H.S. dwelling in us?
- B. What are some of the privileges we enjoy as a result of the H.S. dwelling in us?
- C. What responsibilities do we have as a result of the H.S. dwelling in us?

IV. THE CHURCH IS OUR FAMILY - Matthew 12:46-50, I Timothy 3:15

- A. What are some of the blessings we receive as a result of the church being our family?
- B. What are some of the privileges we enjoy as a result of the church being our family?
- C. What responsibilities do we have as a result of the church being our family?

V. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF BLESSINGS

- A. How can recognizing these blessings and privileges make us more faithful?
- B. How can recognizing these blessings and privileges draw us closer to God?
- C. What will happen to us if we refuse to recognize our responsibilities?

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Lesson #3 – Drawing Near To God Through Discipleship

I. THE CLASSIFICATION OF A DISCIPLE – Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 6:40, Romans 8:29

- A. What does the word “disciple” actually mean?
- B. What is the goal of being a disciple?

II. THE CHARACTER OF A DISCIPLE – John 8:31, 13:34-35, 15:8

- A. How can disciples abide in the word of Christ?
- B. How can disciples love each other?
- C. How can disciples bear much fruit?

III. THE COST OF BEING A DISCIPLE – Matthew 6:33, 10:34-37, Luke 9:23-25, 14:26-27

- A. Who must come first? Why?
- B. Is there any suffering involved with discipleship? Explain.

IV. THE COMPENSATION FOR BEING A DISCIPLE – John 14:27, 15:11, Romans 5:9

- A. What future blessings are we promised for being a disciple?
- B. What present blessings are we promised for being a disciple?

V. THE COMMENCEMENT OF BECOMING A DISCIPLE – Matthew 28:18-20

- A. What role does baptism play in discipleship?
- B. What should a disciple do after baptism?

VI. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF DISCIPLESHIP

- A. How can recognizing our work as true disciples draw us closer to God?
- B. What are the benefits of true discipleship to each believer and to the church?
- C. What will happen to us if we refuse to practice true discipleship?

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Lesson #4 – Drawing Near To God Through Evangelism

I. EVANGELISTIC CHURCHES LOVE – John 13:34-35, I Corinthians 13, I Peter 4:8-9

- A. How does our love prove our submissiveness?
- B. How does our love prove our usefulness?
- C. How does our love prove our faithfulness?

II. EVANGELISTIC CHURCHES LOOK – Luke 15:1-7, 19:10, Galatians 6:1-2

- A. How important is it for us to look for opportunities?
- B. How important is it for us to look for the lost sheep?
- C. How important is it for us to watch and pray daily?

III. EVANGELISTIC CHURCHES LISTEN – Acts 17:11, I Corinthians 3:5-7, 16:13, Colossians 4:3

- A. How does being watchful and praying help us to listen to God?
- B. Who will give me the opportunities? Wisdom of words? Give the increase?

IV. EVANGELISTIC CHURCHES LEARN – Acts 17:11, II Timothy 3:16-17, I Peter 2:12

- A. How can we learn to reach a more receptive audience?
- B. How can we learn what to say and how to react to people?

V. EVANGELISTIC CHURCHES LIVE – Romans 12:13, 16:16, Hebrews 13:2

- A. How can being evangelistic, or at least inviting people, keep us alive as a church?
- B. How can being evangelistic prepare our hearts?

VI. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF EVANGELISM

- A. How can recognizing our need for evangelism draw us closer to God?
- B. What are the benefits of evangelism to each believer and to the church?
- C. If we have been baptized, shouldn't it be easy to share our conversion story?

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Lesson #5 – Drawing Near To God Through Good Works

I. THE PURPOSE OF GOOD WORKS – Ephesians 2:8-10, Titus 2:11-14, 3:1, 4-8, 14

- A. Can we earn or buy our way into heaven? Explain.
- D. Are we required to do good works? Explain.
- C. If we are required to do them, but we cannot be saved because of them, why do them?

II. THE PLEASURE OF GOOD WORKS – Matthew 5:16, James 2:14-17, I Peter 2:11-12

- A. How can our good works bring glory to God?
- B. How can our good works prepare unbelievers to be more receptive to the gospel?
- C. How can our good works demonstrate the living nature of our faith?

III. THE PRACTICE OF GOOD WORKS – Galatians 6:1-2, Hebrews 3:12-13, I Peter 2:9-10

- A. What is the difference between spiritual works and physical works?
- B. How can telling others of God's grace be a good work?
- C. How can encouraging other Christians be a good work?
- D. What kind of good works did Jesus perform while He was on the earth?
- E. What are some good works that we can do today?

VI. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF GOOD WORKS

- A. Could we draw closer to God without performing good works? Explain.
- B. Why is it so hard for us to do good works?
- C. How can recognizing our need for good works draw us closer to God?
- D. What are the benefits of good works to each believer and to the church?

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Lesson #6 – Drawing Near To God Through Knowledge

I. WE MUST GROW IN OUR FAITH – I Corinthians 3:1-3, I Peter 2:1-3, II Peter 1:1-4

- A. Why do people refuse to grow and mature spiritually?
- B. What are the dangers of not maturing or experiencing growth?
- C. How has our lack of knowledge hindered our growth as a church?

II. WE MUST GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE LORD – II Peter 1:5-8

- A. What are the Christian graces, or virtues, and why are they required of us?
- B. Why does Peter tell us to abound in these eight attributes?
- C. What are the benefits of having these eight attributes?

III. WE MUST GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP TO EACH OTHER – II Peter 1:9-11

- A. How can we know that each attribute is necessary and equal to the previous?
- B. Applying these attributes requires diligent effort. How can we do it?
- C. Why should we attempt this transformation?

IV. WE MUST GROW IN OUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE TRUTH – II Peter 1:10-11

- A. How is life and godliness impacted by what I know about the truth?
- B. How can knowing the truth keep me from experiencing spiritual amnesia?
- C. How can knowing the truth keep me from stumbling?
- D. How can not knowing the truth keep me from entering the kingdom?

V. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF KNOWLEDGE

- A. How can recognizing our need for knowledge draw us closer to God?
- B. What are the benefits of knowledge to each believer and to the church?

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Lesson #7 - Drawing Near To God Through Maturity

I. WE HINDER OUR MATURITY – I Corinthians 3:1-3, Hebrews 2:1, 5:13

- A. How does our lack of effort hinder our maturity?
- B. How does not using our talents hinder our maturity?

II. PEOPLE HINDER OUR MATURITY – Matthew 13, II Corinthians 4:8-9, Galatians 6:9

- A. How does discouragement hinder our maturity?
- B. Why do other people try to interfere with our maturity?

III. SATAN WILL HINDER OUR MATURITY – Matthew 13, I Peter 2:1-3, 5:8-11

- A. Why does Satan not want us to reach full maturity?
- B. What will Satan do to keep us from reaching maturity?
- C. How can we resist Satan and keep on maturing in Christ?

IV. WE CAN DEVELOP MATURITY – I Corinthians 3:1-3, 13:1-13, I Peter 2:1-3

- A. How can becoming active in the work of the congregation help us to mature?
- B. How can starting programs, or working in ministries, help us to mature?
- C. How can daily devotions and Bible study help us to mature?
- D. How can teaching and serving help us to mature?
- E. How can evaluating our lives regularly help us to mature?

V. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF MATURITY

- A. How can recognizing our need for maturity draw us closer to God?
- B. What are the benefits of maturity to each believer and to the church?
- C. What hinders our maturity in Christ? How can we avoid those things?

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Lesson #8 – Drawing Near To God Through Prayer

I. THE PURPOSE OF PRAYER – Matthew 6:5-15, Acts 2:42, I Thessalonians 5:17

- A. Why are Christians required to pray to God?
- B. What is your goal when you offer up a prayer?

II. THE PRACTICE OF PRAYER – Matthew 6:5-6, 18:19-20, Acts 2:42

- A. What are the benefits of praying alone, in secret?
- B. What are the benefits of praying with a small group?
- C. What are the benefits of praying in a large group or with the church?

III. THE PATTERN OF PRAYER – Luke 11:1-4

- A. Who are some great Biblical examples of those who believed in prayer?
- D. How much of our prayers include praise and adoration?
- C. How much of our prayers include requests and supplication?

IV. THE PEOPLE OF PRAYER – Jeremiah 29:7, Matthew 6:11, John 17, Ephesians 6:4

- A. Why should we pray for ourselves and for our family?
- B. Why should we pray for church and for the non-believers in the world?
- C. Why should we pray for the community and for our nation?
- D. Why should we pray for the sick, the poor, and the oppressed?

V. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF PRAYER

- A. What are some obstacles we encounter when we pray?
- B. How can we recognize our need for prayer and use that to draw us closer to God?
- C. What are the benefits of prayer to each believer and to the church?
- D. What is hindering your personal walk with God?

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Lesson #9 – Drawing Near To God Through Study

I. BIBLE STUDY IS IMPORTANT – Psalm 19:7-11, 119:9, John 12:48, 17:17, James 1:21

- A. What kind of power does the Bible possess?
- B. How does the Bible possess the power of sanctification?
- E. How does the Bible possess the power of preservation?
- D. How does the Bible possess the power of salvation?

II. BIBLE STUDY IS IMPERITIVE – Matthew 6:33, Acts 18:24-26, Ephesians 3:3-4

- A. Why is it dangerous just to take the preacher at his word?
- B. How can people say that they cannot understand the Bible?
- C. Why do people say that they don't have time to read and study the Bible?

III. BIBLE STUDY IS INFORMATIVE – Acts 17:11, II Timothy 2:15, I Peter 3:15

- A. What are the benefits of a following a planned study?
- B. What are the benefits of a topical study?
- C. What are the benefits of a book-by-book study of the Bible?

IV. BIBLE STUDY IS INCREDIBLE – Psalm 119:10-11, II Timothy 3:16-17

- A. How can having a set time for Bible study benefit my Christian walk?
- B. How can Bible study and prayer together make me stronger spiritually?
- C. How can utilizing Bible helps allow my study to be more effective?

V. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF BIBLE STUDY

- A. How can recognizing our need for Bible study draw us closer to God?
- B. What are the benefits of Bible study to each believer and to the church?
- C. What can you do to increase your personal Bible study time?

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Lesson #9 – Drawing Near To God Through Temptation

I. TEMPTATION CAN HINDER OUR CONDUCT – Galatians 5:19-21, Ephesians 5:3-7

- A. Why are we tempted to do things that are specifically condemned by God?
- B. Why are we tempted to do things that are not specifically condemned by God?
- C. How is Satan still able to persuade us that these things are okay for a Christian?

II. TEMPTATION CAN HINDER OUR CONSCIENCE – Romans 14:23, I Timothy 3:9

- A. Why is it important to have a good conscience?
- B. What will happen if we do things that violate our conscience?

III. TEMPTATION CAN HINDER OUR CONTROL – Titus 2:1-8, Hebrews 5:14

- A. Why should we notice the actions of mature Christians and allow that to influence us?
- B. Why did Paul instruct the older to teach the younger Christians?
- C. Why is self-control such an asset to every Christian, especially our leaders?

IV. TEMPTATION CAN HINDER OUR CHARACTER – I Corinthians 9:19-23, 10:31-11:1

- A. Why should we worry about how we look to others?
- B. Why is it so important to set a good example for other Christians?
- C. How can temptation lead us to even more sin?
- D. Why is it important to ask what Jesus would do?

V. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF TEMPTATION

- A. How can learning more about Satan and his works help us in dealing with temptation?
- B. How can dealing with temptation draw us closer to God?
- C. What are the benefits of temptation to each believer and to the church?
- D. Can you praise God in temptation? Explain.

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Lesson #10 – Drawing Near To God Through The Church

I. THE CHURCH IS REAL – Matthew 16:18, Acts 2:47, Romans 16:16, I Timothy 3:15

- A. How do we know that the church was established?
- B. What is the difference between the local church and the universal church?
- C. How can we keep the church restored and real?
- D. Why do people refuse to believe that the church is the kingdom of God?

II. THE CHURCH IS RESPONSIBLE – Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:11-16, Hebrews 10:24-25

- A. Why should we join ourselves to a local church?
- B. How should we cooperate with the leaders of the church?
- C. What is the difference between members, teachers, ministers, deacons, and elders?
- D. How can we contribute to the regular work of the church?
- E. What are our responsibilities as members of the church?

III. THE CHURCH IS RELIABLE – John 17, I Corinthians 1:10-13, I Timothy 5:14

- A. Why are we told to be faithful to the church?
- B. Why is the church required to be unified and united?
- C. How can we seek unity as a body of believers?
- D. What things should we do to live in a way that speaks well of the church?

IV. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF THE CHURCH

- A. What would we do without the church? How essential is it to our growth?
- B. How can recognizing our need for the church of Christ draw us closer to God?
- C. What are the benefits of the church to each believer and to every congregation?
- D. Can fellowship keep your faith from dwindling? Explain.

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Lesson #11 – Drawing Near To God Through Victory

I. THE PROGRESSIVE NATURE OF SIN – Isaiah 59:2, James 1:14-15, Revelation 21:8

- A. How are we tempted to sin? Explain.
- B. What leads us to sin? Why?
- C. What are the consequences of sin if we do not repent of it?
- D. What do we know about the development of sin?

II. THE POWER TO OVERCOME SIN – Matthew 6:13, Romans 12:2, I Corinthians 10:13

- A. Do we have the ability to change our desires?
- B. How can we limit our opportunities to sin?
- C. How can we exercise self-control and perseverance?
- D. How can we obtain forgiveness from our sins?

III. THE PROVIDENCE THAT PROVIDES VICTORY – John 3:16, Romans 8, James 4:17

- A. How does God play a role in our victory over sin?
- B. How does Jesus Christ play a role in our victory over sin?
- C. How does the Holy Spirit play a role in our victory over sin?
- D. How does the church play a role in our victory over sin?

IV. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF VICTORY

- A. How should we feel about being victorious over Satan and sin?
- B. How can recognizing our need for victory draw us closer to God?
- C. What are the benefits of our victory in Jesus to each believer and to the church?
- D. Why should we consider the work of Jesus as our own personal victory?

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Lesson #12 – Drawing Near To God Through Worship

I. THE ACTIVITIES OF WORSHIP – Acts 2:40-47, 4:32-35, 20:7, I Corinthians 16:1-2

- A. How do the prayers in our worship make you feel?
- B. How do the songs in our worship make you feel?
- C. How do the sermons and scripture readings in our worship make you feel?
- D. How does observing the Lord’s Supper in our worship make you feel?
- E. How does collecting the offering in our worship make you feel?

II. THE ATTITUDES OF WORSHIP – John 4:24, I Corinthians 14:25, I John 3:16-19

- A. How can your attitude help or hinder the worship of the church?
- B. How can thinking about the other people present help our worship?
- C. How can you get the most out of every Bible class and worship service?
- D. Is it possible to walk away from every assembly edified? Explain.

III. THE APPROVAL OF WORSHIP – Matthew 6:1-18, John 4:21-24, Philippians 3:3-6

- A. What is the purpose of our worship?
- B. How much of our worship is meant for God?
- C. How much of our worship is meant for the church?
- D. Is it wrong to change our worship in order to make it more enjoyable to us? Explain.

IV. DRAWING CLOSER TO GOD BECAUSE OF WORSHIP

- A. How can our worship be more effective?
- B. How can recognizing our need for worship draw us closer to God?
- C. What are the benefits of worship to each believer and to the church?
- D. What can you do to become better equipped for worship on the Lord’s Day?