



The joy of
SEEKING
GOD
FIRST

Leaders Guide

** joyshop*
MINISTRIES
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Session 1: Seeking God

1. Is it hard for you to believe that God really does desire to spend time with you?
2. If Jesus would personally come to you and ask why I can't seem to find time to spend with Him, what would you say? Genesis 3:9
3. How would you describe a devoted heart based on I Chronicles 22:19? What would that look like in your life?
4. What are the things you tend to seek over seeking God?
5. What verse spoke to you in the Acts 17 passage?
6. What new revelation did the Holy Spirit give you through Anita's story?
7. What do you desire to change in your life as a result of this workshop?
8. Take time to pray over the desires mentioned.

Session 2: Key Principles Part 1

1. God created us so that we would seek Him. We have a natural (physical) body and a spiritual body. How do you care for each? Which one is easier to care for and why?
2. Of the built-in mechanisms that prompt us to seek God – dissatisfaction, loneliness, restlessness, weakness – which do you feel the most? How do you try to fill them if you don't seek God for help? How does God fill those needs when you seek Him? Which works better?
3. When is a time that you felt the "air of God"? How do you breathe God in?
4. Prayer, according to O. Hallesby, is "a means of intimate and joyous fellowship between God and ourselves." Is this a new way of thinking about prayer for you? Does prayer sometimes feel like work to you – or an obligation? An afterthought? Be honest! How can you come to view it as your special time to chat with the One who created you?
5. Anita tells us that she accepted Christ at age 5, but she has messed up and wondered how the Holy Spirit could be within her. Have you ever doubted the Holy Spirit lives in you? How did you overcome the doubt – or are you still doubting?



6. Some Christians think we can go to church once a week, where someone else feeds us the Word, and that's enough. However, if you are only in God's Word on Sunday morning, you are spiritually sick! Take an honest look at yourself – are you sickly?
7. Kay Arthur says, "The Word of God has been lost in the house of God." How do you react to that statement? Do you experience getting so busy doing the work of the church that you forget to spend time with Jesus? It can happen to all of us; let's talk about how to safeguard against it.
8. Are there any other thoughts on this session that struck you or that you want to discuss?

Session 3: Key Principles Part II

1. Think about the roadblocks that slow you in seeking God. Share some as a group.
2. Reread 2 Timothy 3:1-5. What examples in this text resonate in your life?
3. We heard that your ministry can become the thing that interferes with intimacy with God. What thing in your life – even something good – interferes with your intimacy with God?
4. The enemy is always whispering little lies to us to condemn us. What are some of the lies that you've heard? How did you overcome them? If you haven't, stop together as a group and pray about this right now, using the authority we have as believers in Christ to banish those condemning thoughts.
5. Satan can use the lie of busyness to ensure that we stay away from one-on-one time with God. What are some of the "busy" things in your life that you buy into – one more kid to drive around, one more chore to do around the house, one more project to complete at work? How can you honestly learn to say, "God comes first," and not feel pressured or rushed in your time with Him?
6. Fear is a huge roadblock, yet it also allows us to have the opportunity to practice faith. How has fear prevented you from blessing others? Is fear preventing you from doing what you know God has called you to do? How could spending time in his Word help calm this fear?
7. Do you view the Bible as "holding the very thoughts of God in your hand," as Oswald Chambers says? That's pretty awesome! If not, why not? Is it because you don't understand it? Maybe you even might confess you find it boring at times! It's OK! But now, what steps can you take to address these reasons and get excited about the letters from God that you hold in your hand?



8. Do you use a devotional? Think about whether you allow it to take the place of reading the Bible for yourself and discovering what God wants to teach you by reading His words with your own eyes. Share your insights with the group.

9. Do you make time with God a top priority? What time of day works best for you? Anita tells us that the seasons in her life where she wasn't putting God first were the times she made mistakes. Can you see that pattern in your life?

10. Faith is an ongoing decision. We don't understand everything about God or His ways, but Anita tells that she knows faith works so she is going to use it. When your faith waivers, what do you do? Share some ways you can effectively strengthen your fragile faith when life gets rough.

Session 4: Setting Your Heart

1. What do you think of the idea that we have to pray for the desire to seek God? Does that seem like an odd thing to pray for to you? Do you think you have that desire now? Why or why not?

2. What might prevent you from making a decision to spend daily time with God? Brainstorm together about ways to address common obstacles to that time alone with God.

3. Think about what time and spot would be best for you to meet with God. Share your ideas with each other.

4. How much time do you think would be "sufficient" to have a good quiet time with God? Does 30 minutes seem like a lot, not enough?

5. Do you keep a prayer journal? If so, how has it increased your awareness of God's involvement in your life?

6. Why do you think it's important to share what you've learned with someone? Who could you share it with on a regular basis?

7. Does anyone want to share what the cost may be in your life to spend time with God? In what ways will the rewards be worth the cost?

8. Anita talks about the 'lazy Christian syndrome.' Share your reactions to this. Is she too critical or is she right on? Talk about how recognizing your weaknesses in seeking God is not a bad thing; it's the best thing! Why?



Session 5: Natural Rewards of Seeking God

1. How have you learned to know the Lord thus far? Has it taken a lot of effort? Do you think it really could happen naturally by seeking Him first in your day?
2. How can you prepare your heart to know Him better? By praying? By reading the Bible? By singing praises?
3. Can you believe that you could be transformed by knowing God better? What does the word "transformation" really mean anyway? What are areas in your life that need transformation?
4. Do you worry about whether you are in God's will? How do you try to gauge whether you are or not?
5. Think about the gift(s) God has given you to serve the body of Christ. Share those in your group, if you like.
6. What do you think is the difference between the joy that comes from our circumstances in life and the joy that Jesus gives?
7. Do you believe that you will truly have everything you need if you seek God first? This might be difficult to believe; that's OK. Talk about why it might be difficult.

Session 6: 21-Day Challenge

1. So it's time to "get alone with God." How does that sound to you? Inviting? Exciting? Scary? Unachievable? Discuss your answers.
2. Will you commit to reading one chapter of John a day for 21 days, or at least a section of it? Is this an easy commitment to make? Why or why not? What might you have to give up or do differently in your daily routine to achieve this?
3. Perhaps you already started spending time with God after Session 1. If so, share how the first days of forming this new habit are going. What have you struggled with? How have you addressed that? If you haven't started yet, work together to formulate a plan to combat the obstacles to quiet time that you identified in Session 4.
4. It takes time for the Holy Spirit to speak to your heart. Has this ever happened to you? Care to share? Testifying to the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives can be a huge blessing to others!
5. Do you memorize Scripture? If yes, how does it help you in various situations in your life?



6. Is it easy for you to worship God at home – as easy as corporately in church? How do you worship Him at home?

7. Are you afraid to expect God to answer your prayers? What verses assure us that we can? What do we do when he doesn't appear to answer?

8. As you read John 15:1-17 and asked God 1) What do you want me to know? and 2) What do you want me to do?, what answers did you hear or feel?

9. Could history really be changed because you chose to prioritize your time with God? Why and in what ways?

10. Congratulations – you've finished the Seeking God First Workshop! Share one thing that hit close to home with you or one challenge that you are willing to take up as a result of doing this study. (Remember, we would also love to hear from you. Visit our website at www.joyshop.org and fill out our online evaluation.)

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