

SOAR

Welcome to Abide

Dear SOAR Participant,

Welcome to the part three of SOAR! We are so excited that you have joined us in seeking God more and more in your life. We hope you have completed Seek God and Obtain Truth. Now you will be learning what it means to

Abide by the Spirit...

What thoughts come to your mind when you read the words "Abide by the Spirit?" What does it mean to "abide" anyway? Why is it important for a believer in Christ? How do you overcome the weaknesses of your flesh and live as Christ? We will explore these questions and more in this section of SOAR, Abide.

Our prayer is that the Holy Spirit will impart life-empowering truth that will deepen your spiritual roots and increase your dependence on Him! Join us as we continue on our SOAR journey.

We love you!

Amy and Sheri

WHAT'S INSIDE

Week 1: Abiding Death – Spirit-led living vs. ME-led – with Amy

Week 2: Abiding Faith – Living "as Christ" – with Amy

Week 3: Abiding Emotions – Surrendering emotions to the control of Spirit – with Sheri

Week 4: Abiding Power - God's power living in you - with Sheri

Week 5: Abiding Hope – Keeping hope alive amidst life's trials – with Amy

Week 6: Abiding Love – "The only thing that counts is faith expressed by love" – with Amy and Sheri

Overview

We all want to hear God's voice, but how do you know if it's God's voice or your voice? When you hear Him, how do you respond? What does it look like to follow God on a daily basis? This is what Abide is all about!

Galatians 5:25 says, *"Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit."*

The SOAR Bible Study began with Seek God because you cannot receive truth from a God you do not know.

Seeking to know God is the foundation of our Christian walk. As you spend time with God in prayer and in the Bible, He reveals Himself and you begin to truly fall in love with God.

Maybe you recognize that you do not yet have a relationship with God. If you are ready to invite Him into

your life, simply pray and ask Jesus Christ to forgive you and inhabit you through the Holy Spirit. Now, leave your old life of sin and rebellion because you have been made new, clean, and holy!

This study is a perfect way for you to begin to grow in your understanding of what you now have in Christ Jesus and renew your mind to become more like Him! Welcome to the family of God!

Our prayer for you is that you will know God more intimately, that He will flood the eyes of your heart with revelation and that you will continually surrender your life to Him, moment by moment!

Week One – Abiding Death

With Amy Groeschel

DAY ONE - SURRENDER

SEEK GOD

Review notes from this week's teaching.

Place your mind, will, emotions, and body under the control of the Spirit. Choose to lay everything down before the Father in authentic, loving prayer.

For example, if you struggle with acting out of your anger, ask God to help you surrender your emotional reactions to Him. If you are making poor choices with your body, maybe immoral, over-eating or substance abuse, confess them to God and ask Him to help you fully surrender

OBTAIN TRUTH

Take out your SOAR journal and title your first page with the two headings, "Old Nature" and "New Nature."

Read Romans 6 and jot down all you learn about a believer before Christ and in Christ.

Here's an example of what I learned from verses 1 and 2:

Old Nature
Sin dominated

New Nature
I died to sin

Now it's your turn to dig into the chapter and gain insight about the old-you verses the new-you in Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.

Romans 6:6,7



ABIDE

Are you living more out of your old nature or the new nature? Have you drifted from your first-love, Jesus, and now you're the one calling the shots?

Jesus clearly explains in Luke 9:23, 24 how a wholly surrendered follower of Christ should live. He declares, "*Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.*"

We are called to die to our old nature *daily!* Daily. Actually moment-by-moment would be even more accurate. This can only be done by fully relying on Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit in us. The cross we are to carry, I believe, is the cross of dying to ourselves. I don't know about you, but I don't follow anyone very well unless I have given over all self-reliance.

Remember, we are not created new in Christ to be independent and self-sufficient. God wants us dependent on Him. We are called to be slaves to God and His righteousness. Apart from Him, you and I are incapable of anything life-giving. Have you traded a close, vibrant relationship for your own imitation of following Him? Living from His strength is true freedom! Regardless of your circumstances, He is sufficient to supply your every need.

Respond to God now in prayer.

Week One – Abiding Death

With Amy Groeschel

DAY TWO – THROUGH THE SPIRIT

SEEK GOD

Draw near to God. He is waiting. Choose to give all your heart, mind and strength to the Father in authentic, loving prayer.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Speak the memory verse aloud two times.

Before you read, ask the Holy Spirit to be your teacher. Read Romans 7 and 8:1-17

Compile a list of “What you have in Christ” from Romans 8:1-17. We could have made this list for you but then you’d miss out on the powerful discovery process. Write down in your journal everything God revealed to you through your reading.

MEMORY VERSE

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. Romans 6:6,7

ABIDE

Have you ever noticed that Christians still battle the flesh (the old sin-nature)? Unfortunately, this is not always hard to miss. The great news is that when you died with Christ into the new law of the Spirit, you were given His Life and His Spirit! You were made new but the old way of life can still creep back in. It shows up in our behaviors and thoughts.

Is there a sinful behavior that you are still participating in or have given up on overcoming? Are you ready to surrender this to God?

Ephesians 4:22 says to, “Get rid of, throw off, put to death, do away with your old life, nature, or flesh.” Why? Because we are new creations! Your former life is rotten, dead and stinky. It doesn't belong to you anymore. So, keep it out of your new life and follow Jesus wholeheartedly.

Through the Holy Spirit, we have access to God’s nature and His power to overcome our flesh. You and I can diligently try our best to “be good” in our own power. We will fail every time with self-effort. But. We...you... can always overcome through the Spirit (Romans 8:13). Always.

When I was seven, I accepted Christ as my Savior. I clearly remember my ‘new nature’ (the Holy Spirit) changing me. My desires and thoughts were different. I suddenly *wanted* to please God and not my selfishness. I began to hate sin and love people. I was a witnessing machine! I shared Christ at the bus stop, in my home, on the phone, at recess, wherever I lost people were. Not because I had to. I wanted to. I cared so much.

Through my teen years, I had tremendous struggles because I began to follow the ungodly lifestyle of my peers. Peer acceptance became more important than my Father’s. Over the course of two years, God’s Spirit gently and lovingly drew me back to Him. On November 19, 1989, my prodigal heart came home. I was brought to repentance through my own misery and God’s kind conviction.

Since that November, I have yearned to wholeheartedly follow the Spirit more and more. God is still on the job of refining and perfecting me. I am so thankful for His patience, aren’t you?

God is amazingly faithful! The Holy Spirit will complete in you what He began. Let Him have all.

Week One – Abiding Death

With Amy Groeschel

DAY THREE – KICK SIN OUT

SEEK GOD

Nothing will be able to separate you from the love of God. He will never leave you nor forsake you. (Romans 8:38-39) Pause and meditate on these promises and give thanks to God in prayer.

MEMORY VERSE

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. Romans 6:6,7

OBTAIN TRUTH

Recite the memory verse aloud. Read Ephesians 4:17-32 and 5:1-21

In your journal, write down two headings: “Take Off” and “Put On.” Under each heading, identify what you are called to do as a follower of Jesus Christ. Process the answers on your list. What do you need to take off? What do you need to put on?

Pray and ask God to help you be transformed in this process.

ABIDE

I recently read this comment on YouVersion.com about the *old self*:

“Very easy to let my old frame of mind, when I was living for myself, creep up and start controlling my decisions. Important to remember there is a conscious choice...to keep the new self refreshed and full of life by staying submerged in God’s word.”

I can relate to this person’s statement. Can you? My old nature is not always willing to lie down and die. At times it wants to get up and throw a big party. How can our new nature overcome this menacing adversary?

Here are two practical ways:

1. Be engaged in the word of God, meditating on the Truth.
2. Make a continuous choice to ‘put on,’ joyful obedience.

Let me make state these more simply... Joyfully know and obey the Word! As we seek to live righteously, our aim should be to know the Righteous One (God) more and more. He is our righteousness! As we deepen our relationship with God, we love Him more. Love wants to please and submit to the object of its affection. We were created anew to live with God in true righteousness and holiness. Walking with and for the Father is not chore, but rather the most satisfying, peaceful, life-giving thing we will ever do.

So, do you need to turn from some sin that has stolen its way back into your life? Let me help identify some of the ugly suckers (Yes, suckers, because sin is a parasite, stealing from your life!): Greed (which is idolatry and stems from ungratefulness), rudeness, gossip, rage, self-righteousness, envy, selfishness, addiction to something other than God, pride, vanity, unbelief...Okay, was that enough to get you thinking?

Maybe you’ve tolerated a certain sin because you’ve wrongly believed, “This will never change in me.” This is a lie. Don’t ever give up. Get rid of it. Disobedience to God causes you to be spiritually dull. Get alert, sharp and on fire! Simply confess the sin to God and turn away (or maybe, run away) from it. You will overcome your flesh and your spiritual enemy when you choose God’s path.

Week One – Abiding Death

With Amy Groeschel

DAY FOUR – IT'S NOT MY LIFE

SEEK GOD

Seeking God should be a blessed time of true intimacy. Never rush friendship with the King of kings! This King is our amazing Father! He is the Father of fathers! Give Him your full attention right now in relationship.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Say the memory verse aloud to help you remember it.

Read Galatians 5:16-26 and Colossians 3:1-14. On a new journal page, make two columns, "Death" and "Life." From these verses, write down those things that bring death or bring life

MEMORY VERSE

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. Romans 6:6,7

ABIDE

We already have all of the Holy Spirit, but becoming like Him and producing His fruit is a process. This transformational journey is known as sanctification. At salvation, Christ calls you to lay aside all that is not of the Spirit and give Him control of every area of your life.

You have learned this week that you have a part to play as to which nature comes from your life. You have an ongoing choice to make. Living the abiding life is achieved by your continuous choice to surrender to God.

If we believe and trust God and His Word, we should think, speak, and live from that faith. We should obey Him. Basically, we should choose life.

To obey means: adhere to, abide by, act in accordance with, conform to, follow, and stick to.

Obedience also means to do what someone says, carry out someone's orders; submit to, defer to, bow to, yield to, give in to. We must allow Christ, whom we are hidden in, to have His way in us.

If this is not your reality, then ask God to increase your faith as you seek Him. We are all vulnerable to sinful desires that allow our minds to be swept up in worldliness and ungodliness when our faith is weak.

Revolutionize your thoughts and your life with this truth: Christ is your life! (Colossians 3:4) Let me explain this truth with an example from my life.

Just yesterday, I was tempted not to return a phone call that I promised I would make. To call would mean I would be placing myself in an uncomfortable situation. My flesh did not want to do it. I wanted to forget about doing what was right! (Oh, how I love comfort!) However, my new nature knew that it's always best to obey and please God rather than my selfish desires. So, I chose obedience to God and death to my unloving, selfish, old flesh and made the call.

Okay, so...the annoying circumstances that I had anticipated still occurred. But I had peace, genuine love and patience that were truly otherworldly. As you choose to abandon your way for God's Way, something supernatural happens in you. You become like Christ Jesus!

Choose to walk in the reality of who you really are!

Week One – Abiding Death

With Amy Groeschel

DAY FIVE – DRESS YOUR BEST

SEEK GOD

Quiet your mind and take a deep breath. Fully give your whole being (your mind, will, emotions and bodily strength) to the control of the Holy Spirit. Choose to lay everything down before the Father in authentic, loving prayer.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Say the memory verse aloud. This week we have been learning how to live a life that dies to our flesh. I have been intentionally redundant in hopes that the truth of abiding in death to self would sink in. Today, we will look at what is needed to be fully prepared in all of life's battles.

Go to Ephesians 6:10 in your Bible. Open your journal and jot down the topic, "The armor of God." As you read through Ephesians 6:10-18, compile a list of what the armor is and what it is used for. Keep in mind that the armor is symbolic of what we have in Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin – because anyone who has died has been set free from sin. Romans 6:6,7

ABIDE

Our struggle is not really with people, is it? People are never truly the enemy. We are in an on-going spiritual battle. The Bible teaches us to use the "armor" for our strength, protection, and preparation in good works. We have been equipped for spiritual warfare!

God gave us His truth, His righteousness, His gospel, His faith, His salvation and His Word. The armor is His and essentially, the armor is Him! The command given is to "Be strong! Stand firm! Then after having done that, STAND!" ... "In the Lord", in His might and power, in His armor!

You cannot successfully manage life's battles in your own strength. It is only through the risen Savior, Jesus, that you can overcome Satan's attacks. When you know God, you're certain you can place all your trust in Him. Faith in Him makes you able to stand firm because you know He is trustworthy, mighty and lovingly faithful. You know that He will never leave you or forsake you. Dress your best. Clothe yourself with Christ. Continue in your pursuit to know the Father more and more. He is your Source, period.

Here's one more thought to keep in mind:

1 Corinthians 10:12,13 says, "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it."

This verse is crucial for our understanding of how to defeat temptation.

Are there any temptations in your life right now? Take a moment to list them and offer them to God. Ask Him to show you the way out from under them.

We can be sure that all temptation, no matter how great, has an escape route. We must choose to escape. Choose not to say that unkind word. Choose not to control by manipulation. Choose the blessing of obedience and make a break for the exit door. Remember, we must not be too confident in ourselves to think we are above falling into sin. Remain humble and dependent on God's strength.

CRAVE

Read James 1:13-27

There are various methods that can be used to study scripture. This week we are introducing a new method: The ABC method. If you went through part 2, Obtain Truth, of SOAR then you'll remember the ABC study method.

Here is a simple explanation for this study tool:

"A" is for "A title" – How would you summarize, in a title form, the passage you read?

"B" is for "Best verse" – What was your favorite verse? There is no right or wrong answer.

"C" is for "Calling" – Does this passage call you to live out a certain task?

The ABC Method will help you learn from the truth in a new way, but a Bible study method will not bring revelation—God does! The more important role of a Bible study is communing with God. Your relationship with Him is more important than the knowledge you gain.

Week Two – Abiding Faith

With Amy Groeschel

VIDEO MESSAGE NOTES

The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God. Galatians 2:20

The life I live, I live by _____.

To Abide is to live by _____ in Jesus.

Abiding by faith is “_____” with the Spirit.

Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

Galatians

5:26

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight. Do not be wise in your own eyes; fear the Lord and shun evil. Proverbs 3:5-7

You don’t live by faith all on your own!

For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. Philippians 2:13

To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me. Colossians 1:29

Jesus is our best example of an Abiding Life: “...I love the Father and I do exactly what my Father has commanded me.” John 14:31

MEMORY VERSE

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Galatians 2:20

NOTES

Week Two – Abiding Faith

With Amy Groeschel

MEMORY VERSE

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

DAY ONE – LIVE BY THE DADDY

SEEK GOD

Draw near to God in prayer with your heart filled with a confident and patient hope. Enjoy the richness of His fellowship.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Recite this week's memory verse aloud.

What does it truly mean to abide? John 15 gives a great picture of the abiding life through the example of a tree. Read the words of Jesus in John 15:1-8. We will read more from John 15 later in our study. Make "How do I live by my Daddy?" your journal heading for today.

ABIDE

To remain or abide in Jesus, the Vine is to live by faith in Him. The Vine is the source for good fruit. Galatians 5:22-23 explains what the fruit of the Spirit looks like: Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

The fruit of the Spirit lives in you at salvation because the "fruit" is the nature of God. His nature or fruit is manifested through you when you abide in Him. You see it's not about your effort to love and produce joy. A thriving relationship with the Living Vine is what produces His fruit in your life!

Notice I said, a "thriving" relationship. Good fruit comes from a healthy plant. To be spiritually healthy, God, the Gardener, needs to water your faith with the Word and prune your flesh. You need to trust and depend on Christ to carry out His work in you. Please understand though, that the simplicity of abiding does not mean it is effortless. You must cooperate with God's pruning and allow God to continually shine His holy light on your heart.

Read the list below and circle the areas that you need to "let go and let God."

LET GO

My way
My doubt
My strength
My understanding
My fear
My pride
My anger
My independence
My selfishness

LET GOD

His Way
His Truth
His Power
His Wisdom
His Peace
His Humility
His Kindness
His Calling
His Love

Take your circled areas of weakness to God in prayer. Believe in His power to change and heal you.

Week Two – Abiding Faith

With Amy Groeschel

MEMORY VERSE

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

DAY TWO – “COME TO ME”

SEEK GOD

Choose to surrender yourself completely to God. Pray your memory verse aloud two times. Pour out your heart to God in prayer.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Today’s reading assignment is printed out for you. Read the words of Jesus slowly to take in its entire meaningful flavor. Read it again and again until you are ready to respond to God with a written prayer in your journal.

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30

ABIDE

I have realized that whenever I become familiar with something, like driving the same route home, I mentally check out and go into autopilot. I rely on my routine, my habit, and my abilities, to get me through. Friends, this is not how God intends for His children to live.

The other day I drove right past my turn to get to the dentist. I was unconsciously taking my common, weekly route that takes me to my girl’s dance lessons. It’s no shock that I could make such a mistake since I typically only go to the dentist twice a year.

Let’s look at the spiritual lesson here. We form habits of relying on our own experiences, knowledge and abilities rather than staying fully alert to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. We even tend to do this while reading familiar passages in the Bible.

Take a fresh look at two passages that are beautifully paraphrased in The Message Bible.

"Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life. I'll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won't lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you'll learn to live freely and lightly." Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)

Trust God from the bottom of your heart; don't try to figure out everything on your own. Listen for God's voice in everything you do, everywhere you go; he's the one who will keep you on track. Don't assume that you know it all. Run to God! Run from evil! Proverbs 3:5-7 (MSG)

What about you? Do you rely on your own understanding or past experiences to get you through the day? Are you willing to do whatever necessary to become spiritually awakened to the reality that Christ is to *be* your life? If so, what will you need to change in your daily routine to follow the Holy Spirit more completely?

Acknowledge God as your guide, your ever-present help, your rest, your strength and everything you need!

Week Two – Abiding Faith

With Amy Groeschel

DAY THREE – TO KNOW YOU MORE

SEEK GOD

Pray your memory verse aloud. Ask God to lead your every thought and step. Quiet your heart before God in prayer. Listen for Him.

MEMORY VERSE

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read John 14:5-14

Title your journal page, “Jesus.” Make a list of everything Jesus says about Himself and His faith-full followers. The disciples spent time with Jesus in the flesh. They walked with Him and were eyewitnesses to many miracles, yet Jesus said to them in John 14:9, “Don’t you know me?” Abiding in Christ is a continuous journey of knowing Him more and more intimately. The longer you know God, the more you are conformed to His image.

ABIDE

Verses 13 and 14 are powerful statements:

And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

“Whatever” we ask? Ask “anything?” What an amazing promise! Notice the words, “in my name” and “that the Father may be glorified.” These words readily define genuine abiding. The emphasis is our relationship with Christ and glorifying God.

1 Corinthians 2:16 says, “we have the mind of Christ.”

Living with the mind of Christ means your desires are *His* desires and therefore you can pray and live according to *His* will and for *His* glory. Trust God when your requests are not delivered as you thought they would be. Continue to do your part and abide. Create a habit of dwelling on God and His truth. Remember Romans 8 teaches that the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace! The longer you walk with God the greater your faith will grow and strengthen because you’ve experienced His faithfulness.

Spend the remainder of your time in devoted prayer with your Father. Pursue knowing Him. Saturate your emotions, thoughts and bodily energies in Him.

Week Two – Abiding Faith

With Amy Groeschel

MEMORY VERSE

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

DAY FOUR – I WILL FOLLOW YOU

SEEK GOD

Pray over this week's memory verse. Acknowledge that your life is not your own. Pursue Christ Jesus, who is your life. Place all your attention on loving, trusting and obeying Him.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Your Scripture reading is printed below for you today so that you can focus on the words of Jesus. Circle, highlight or underline anything that stands out to you regarding how Jesus "abides in" the Father.

First allow me to give you the setting of today's text. Jesus was healing on the Sabbath and calling God His own Father. Because the Jews measured their righteousness by how well they followed the law, many Jews were questioning and persecuting Jesus for His actions.

Jesus responded with this answer: "Very truly I tell you, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, and he will show him even greater works than these, so that you will be amazed." And then in verse 30 Jesus says, "By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me." John 5:19-20, 30

And now in John chapter 16, Jesus explains a function of the Spirit of Truth (the Holy Spirit).

"When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future. He will bring me glory by telling you whatever he receives from me. All that belongs to the Father is mine; this is why I said, 'The Spirit will tell you whatever he receives from me.'" John 16:13-15

We are called to become like Christ! Write the title, "WDJD" (What did Jesus do?) on a new journal page. Based on the text from John 5, record Jesus' explanations of how He lived.

ABIDE

Now it's your turn to consider the following questions:

- What do I do?
- If Jesus only did what the Father did, how should I live?
- Am I asking for God's direction?
- Have I learned how to listen to and discern God's voice?

Be honest. Have you been living out of total dependency on God or from self-reliance? Maybe you've never believed it was possible to live how Jesus lived. The truth is, it is not only possible, but it is how we are called to live!

Begin today, asking God for His assignments rather than asking Him to bless your own agendas. Start the morning, asking the Father, "What would you have me do today? Father, interrupt my plans. Please give me ears to hear and eyes to see you."

Before you write an email, make a phone call, or have a conversation, ask God about what to say and how to say it. God is waiting for you to give Him full reign of every detail in your life. He really is. And He is a detail genius!

The song Trent Austin sang for us, "Where You Go, I'll Go," by Brian and Jenn Johnson says it all... "How could I expect to walk without you when every move that Jesus made was in surrender?"

Oh to truly understand your unity with Jesus, to clothe yourselves with Him, and walk as He walked! It's time to stop living life outside of God's strength and guidance. Surrender all. Depend fully. God wants you to abandon everything to Him and have complete control of your life. He needs you to remain tuned in and listening. All of Hell desires that you remain in a state of spiritual apathy and self-dependence. I'd suggest you and I say, "Hell NO! No sin or distraction will stop me from doing God's will!"

Spend the remainder of your time visiting with the Father in prayer. Ask Him to reveal anything that is holding you back from full dependency on Him.

Week Two – Abiding Faith

With Amy Groeschel

DAY FIVE – LISTENING

SEEK GOD

Pray your memory verse aloud. You are God's treasured possession and true delight! Give your whole mind, heart and strength to loving your Father in prayer.

MEMORY VERSE

I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.
Galatians 2:20

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read John 10:1-18

Write these three titles on a journal page: "The Shepherd/Gate," "The Thief," and "The sheep." Record all you learn about each group.

ABIDE

Hearing from God is essential for all believers. Yet many of us are unsure of how to hear God's voice. We vacillate between, "Is this God's voice, my voice, or the thief's voice? How do I know? What does His guidance actually sound like?"

Have you ever tried to hold a conversation with a friend amongst a crowd of people? It's hard to do! It's difficult to communicate with the various distractions and noises that demand our attention.

Be assured, God is trying to communicate. Turn off the radio in your car, the television or computer at home, and even, yes even your cell phone. Give yourself the gift of silence and wait on the quiet voice of the Spirit. Psalm 46:10 says, "*Be still, and know that I am God...*" Learn the habit of being still (quieting your soul) and listen for His guidance.

Don't get worried or upset if it seems that God's voice is silent. In the Psalms we see the esteemed King David, who was regarded as "a man after God's own heart," often wearily lamenting as he waited for God to speak and reveal His presence.

Expect God to speak through the Bible, His people and sometimes-even circumstances. He also will speak through whispers in which His voice speaks quietly to our hearts. These whispers may sound like your own thoughts, except they are usually uniquely different in content, but they are His voice. You will be less distracted and hear Him clearly if you are "in-tune" and abiding with the Spirit.

I encourage you to ask God to help you be sensitive to His voice and to live in constant communication with Him. Friends talk to friends and friends listen to friends. You are a friend of God! – And what a wonderful friend you have in Jesus!

Week Three – Abiding Emotions

With Sheri Yates

VIDEO MESSAGE NOTES

For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice. James 3:16

What has living out of your emotions cost you?

CHOOSE to A.B.I.D.E.

A_____ with God

God won't force you to agree with Him. (1 Corinthians 13)

The tongue has the power of life and death, Proverbs 18:21

B_____ His Word

The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you – they are full of the Spirit and life. John 6:63

Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will. Romans 12:2

I_____ triggers

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27

D_____ your body

"No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave..."

1 Corinthians 9:27

E_____ yourself

...but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God.

1 Samuel 30:6

You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever. Psalm 16:11

You can learn more:

David (1 Samuel 30), Moses (Numbers 20), and Cain (Genesis 4)

MEMORY VERSE

*You keep him in perfect peace
whose mind is stayed on you,
because he trusts in you. Isaiah
26:3 (ESV)*



Week Three – Abiding Emotions

With Sheri Yates

DAY ONE – STOP THE “EMOTION COMMOTION”

SEEK GOD

Identify which triggers cause your dashboard warning lights (the example from this week’s message) to flash. Ask God to reveal to you where you are abiding by your emotions rather than the by the Holy Spirit.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read this week’s memory verse aloud.

Currently, are you living more out of your mind, will and emotions than the truth of God’s word? How do you know?

A thought leads to an emotion and the emotion leads to an action. In my (Sheri) case, a thought can lead to an emotion, then a more negative thought, a stronger emotion, another negative thought, and then, finally, an action! It is what I like to call a nasty train wreck – an “emotion commotion!”

It can mentally and emotionally eat me up...if I allow it! However, thoughts and emotions can only control you if you cooperate with them.

I have learned that I have certain triggers that cause me to ride on this emotional train. We will talk more about triggers later.

Read Galatians 5:19-20. These are the acts of the sinful nature. Each of these acts has a natural emotional response. Brainstorm in your journal what emotions generally result from these acts of your flesh. For example, impurity can result in the emotion of loneliness, sadness and feeling unworthy.

Identify your negative emotions. Now ask God to help you know what act of your flesh might be causing or triggering that emotion.

Read the remainder of Galatians 5 and write down the answer to this question: “What are the thoughts or feelings you should experience when you are abiding in the Spirit of God?” In what ways have you experienced or seen the Spirit manifest his fruit in you?

MEMORY VERSE

*You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.
Isaiah 26:3 (ESV)*

ABIDE

How can the Spirit control your thoughts and emotions? Galatians 5:24 specifically explains that we have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.

When we engage that old self, our old sinful nature, we get stinkin' thinkin' and "emotion commotion." Some refer to this as "drama." You know what I am talking about.

This subject on emotion runs deep. It will require prayer and much meditation. Write down all that God reveals to you over the week.

Let me encourage you with some of my struggles.

I use to be consumed with worry. I worried about everything – war, terrorist attacks, death, sickness, poverty, rain, being rejected by a friend, finding a mate, work, etc. If you could worry about it, I did! I was always dwelling on "what-if," and the worst-case scenario.

Not any more! Worry no longer dominates my thoughts. How did I overcome worry? I did some practical things. But it started with knowing God. 1 John 4:18 says, *"...There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love."* The more I got to know God and His amazing love for me, the more I gained greater freedom from worry.

I did other things too. You'll find out about them as we go through the next few days. Here is a summary of some of the things I do to emotionally ABIDE:

- Agree with what God says is true
- Believe God's Word over my or others opinions
- Identify triggers that cause negative thoughts
- Deny the flesh through fasting and exercise
- Encourage myself in the Lord with truth

I still fall short, but I have so much more victory than I once did.

You need to understand the old sinful nature was crucified with Christ, but your flesh, old thought patterns, and habits may still rise up in you, they have no more authority over you! Emotions are powerful, but you can chose to walk in this Truth rather than emotions that come out of your flesh. Take captive every thought and emotion in your soul that sets itself above the Truth. (2 Corinthians 10:5)

Make a list of 100 things that bring you joy throughout this week. At the end of the week, see how it changed your perspective.

Week Three – Abiding Emotions

With Sheri Yates

DAY TWO – TRIGGERS

SEEK GOD

Continue to ask God to reveal triggers that cause you to operate out of the flesh rather than out of the Spirit.

MEMORY VERSE

*You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.
Isaiah 26:3 (ESV)*

OBTAIN TRUTH

Some of my (Sheri) adverse emotional triggers are being overly hungry, excessively tired, and seeing my home become a cluttered mess. I am more likely to strike out at my husband or children when I am hungry. My family says I turn into military mom if our home is extremely disorganized! They join forces to protect one another.

I don't want to be known as this terrible person I can become in my flesh. It's purely selfish! I am putting my needs and desires above everyone else in these situations. It makes me nothing short of an adult brat!

What about you? Do you know your triggers yet? If you don't, just ask someone who knows you well.

Title a journal page, "Triggers of David, Moses and Cain" then read 2 Samuel 11:1-5, Numbers 20:7-12, and Genesis 4:3-8. List the triggers for each man as you find them.

Label another page "My triggers." Keep this page handy throughout the week and ask God to reveal them to you. Be aware of when you act out of the flesh and write down what you believe was the root cause.

ABIDE

Emotions are helpful tools, when we know how to use them.

When my first child was a baby, she had a fever of 105. I was so scared! I took her to the doctor and he told me this: "It's a virus. It will run its course. Don't panic. But..." he hesitated. "I am sure you are not going to like this - If you can stand it, let her run the fever. The fever isn't the problem. It's just an indicator that there is a problem. The heat of the fever can kill the virus."

I wondered about that all day. The fever isn't the problem? It's just an indicator that there is a problem?

Just like fever is an indicator of a problem, so are our emotions. Emotions are indicators. And we often misuse them.

Emotions are helpful tools, *if* we know how to use them. Remember the dashboard warning lights? Imagine if when you saw the warning lights, you punched the passenger instead of opening up the hood of the car or praying? That would be foolish!

But...That is basically how we react in our flesh! Something triggers our thoughts and emotions and we respond by striking out and hurting someone or withdrawing from God rather than looking for the reason behind the trigger! That is sad! The poor emotional response is warning us of an internal condition in our heart.

We, the body of Christ, should not misuse the emotions God has given us to the harm of others. Instead, we need to use them to identify what is causing us to step away from intimacy with God.

Week Three – Abiding Emotions

With Sheri Yates

MEMORY VERSE

You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

Isaiah 26:3 (ESV)

DAY THREE- SUBMITTED EMOTIONS

SEEK GOD

Pray over and meditate on this week's memory verse. Ask Father to give you wisdom and revelation.

OBTAIN TRUTH

I remember a time when I couldn't feel God's presence. I also remember feeling like God would distance Himself from me when I wasn't obedient. I would feel so guilty.

I started thinking that maybe my sins were too bad for God so He gave up on me! Seriously, I thought this. The more my thoughts consumed me the guiltier I felt. The more I thought, the more my emotions increased – I felt lonely, depressed, and abandoned.

Thankfully I've learned that this was not the truth. I cannot trust my feelings as evidence that God is or isn't within me. I have to fully put my trust in Him and His Word that He will never leave me. (Matthew 28:20). I have to trust this truth regardless of how I feel.

How did this emotional downward spiral I experience even start?

It began with a thought. My emotional pain erupted from a thought. That's all it takes – one thought to start a chain reaction of negative emotions and more damaging thoughts.

This is why Jesus tells us to control our thoughts. In 2 Corinthians 10:5 the Bible teaches us that we have the power to "take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ." Once a thought is conceived, our emotions will respond accordingly unless we change our thinking!

Title a journal page, "Abiding Emotions." The Bible gives us truths and tools to train our soul (our mind, will and emotions) to abide by the Spirit of God.

Read all or one of today's passages: 1 Corinthians 9:25-27, 2 Corinthians 10:5, Matthew 6:33, 1 Samuel 16:1, 1 Samuel 30:6, 1 Samuel 31:13, Galatians 5:24-26, Colossians 3, Isaiah 26:3, Isaiah 54:17, 1 Peter 1:8, Proverbs 23:7, Deuteronomy 30:19, Romans 8:6, Romans 10:17, Zechariah 4:6

Make a list of practical things the bible teaches that you can do to get your emotions to submit to the Spirit.

Take time to write down any emotions and thoughts that spiral you down into places that are set against God's truth. For example:

"I'm insecure"

"I'm unlovable"

"I'm alone"

Take the lies captive by God's truth and make them obedient to Christ. Next, write down the truth beside to your negative thoughts. Like these below:

"I'm secure!"

"I'm loved!"

"I'm in Christ and Christ is in me!"

ABIDE

Many of us are working hard trying to be good enough to abide in Christ, but it's not by our efforts and moral strength; it's by His Spirit. Goodness is about Him working in and through us – not us striving on our own. We have to change our thinking here and throw our lame attempts (which can only bring self-righteousness) to the side, the Spirit of God can move in all His might.

Zechariah 4:6 says, "...Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says the LORD Almighty."

Self-effort compartmentalizes God.

Out of a sense of duty or habit, for instance, you might have your quiet time and then walk away from it to live the rest of your day without another thought of God. Your day just became too overwrought with tasks and ongoing distractions. If this is you, please realize that you don't have to live this way! It is possible to have meaningfully connected fellowship with God throughout the busiest of days!

How is this done? – Minute by minute – You learn to sustain an awareness of His presence with you. Child of God, recognize that His presence won't depart you! Once you've maintained this realization, begin to delight and rejoice in it. The overflow of this truth will create an amazing child to Daddy relationship.

Does this seem overly simplistic to you? You have things to do – work, kids, study, appointments, etc. Each of us can list a thousand things we need to do! Let me explain how this has worked out in my family:

This summer, as a family, we focused on Isaiah 26:3, *"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You because he trusts in You."*

Before we focused our attention on Isaiah, I saw idleness in the attitudes of my kids.

So here's how we practically took idleness of thought and kept our minds on God – I started spending more time in the details of what my children were doing. We used this acronym for SOAR to continually focus us on God:

Seek God – Pray aloud together every morning

Obtain Truth – Read the Bible at the start of each day together

Ask questions – How did you see God today?

Respond to God – Praised and thanked God throughout the day

This gave my family a fresh perspective. We now see everything through new eyes! Everything my kids read, do or look at is now an opportunity for them to see God in a fresh way. It is helping all of us keep our thoughts on God!

As Isaiah 26:3 moved from our heads to our hearts. We began to see a complete change in our family's imaginations, attitudes, actions, and the things we talked about.

When you understand how much God loves you (if you are not sure, go back to week eight "I Am Loved" in Obtain Truth), it becomes easy to keep your mind on Him because He loves you so much. He loves you unconditionally and will always be with you. (Matthew 28:20)

If you aren't experiencing perfect peace (Romans 8:6), try our SOAR acronym. Jesus is the Prince of Peace!

Week Three – Abiding Emotions

With Sheri Yates

DAY FOUR – ENCOURAGE YOURSELF

SEEK GOD

Ask God for the heart and eyes of David so you can more fully understand your identity in Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

*You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.
Isaiah 26:3 (ESV)*

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read 1 Samuel 30:1-20

Divide a journal page in half. On one half use the title “Worldly Response” and on the other write, “Godly Response.”

As you read this chapter, write down how you see the men in this story respond to their crisis situation.

In 1 Samuel 30:6, David encouraged himself in the Lord. I cannot imagine coming home and finding my spouse, family, home, belongings, and town completely gone. Imagine the devastation.

What do you suppose David was thinking that cause him to be encouraged and to encourage his men?

Use your imagination and write down on a new journal page, “How David Encouraged Himself.” Think on your answers all throughout the day or even for a few days. Then, come back to this journal page and jot down your additional thoughts.

ABIDE

What circumstance is before you right now? You have a choice – two ways to respond. You can choose the path of David’s men or you can choose the path of David. Which will you choose? Why?

Ask God to reveal to you how to respond to your circumstance with a godly response rather than a worldly response.

Our family has recently been under a major spiritual attack. We have been applying 1 Samuel 30:6 to our daily life. We have written down all the wonderful things God has done for our family – the salvations of family and friends, the miracles we have experienced, and other things that remind us of God’s love for us. We posted each wonder of God on our wall.

Now we can pray and thank God as we look at what He has done. Every time we feel discouraged we can easily recall that God is for us and not against us. And every single time we are completely encouraged! It’s absolutely true that in the presence of the Lord is the fullness of joy! (Psalms 16:11)

Continue reciting your memory verse aloud. As your heart and mind are remain on the Lord, He will keep you in perfect peace.

Week Three – Abiding Emotions

With Sheri Yates

DAY FIVE – FEAR NOT

SEEK GOD

Pray over the memory verse this morning. Ask God to help your soul learn to abide in Him like Paul!

MEMORY VERSE

*You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.
Isaiah 26:3 (ESV)*

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read John 14 and title a journal page, “Jesus’ last instructions to me.”

John 14 includes part of Jesus’ last words to His disciples. He is getting ready to be crucified and He wants His disciples to be prepared for the upcoming days. He wants them to be strong and not be moved by the circumstances that they will experience. Jesus wants them to stand firm in the truth that he has been teaching them for the last three years.

ABIDE

Jesus commanded us in John 14 verse 1 and 27 to not allow our emotions and a negative thought life control our behavior. Just before He was crucified, He instructed the disciples to not let their hearts be troubled. What? They were getting ready to see their leader, friend and teacher crucified on a cross. In the immediate, it would look like the past three years of their life were wasted. They didn’t have a full understanding of God’s plan yet.

Jesus tried to explain to them what was going to happen. He was giving them a command to “not let their hearts be troubled.” Take another look at His words:

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:27

The word troubled in the original Greek text means “to stir” or to “agitate.” We could say, “Do not allow your mind and emotions to be stirred up in an anxious, fearful knot. Receive peace, *my* peace, I offer it to you!”

Check out John 14:27 in the amplified version, “*Peace I leave with you; My [own] peace I now give and bequeath to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. [Stop allowing yourself to be agitated and disturbed; and do not permit yourselves to be fearful and intimidated and cowardly and unsettled.]*”

Admit it, you have experienced emotional roller coasters. Maybe it’s because you looked at your circumstances rather than looking at God. When you dwell on the trials and problems in front of you they seem bigger than God. Never depend on your own understanding. Instead, trust in your God who has complete understanding.

The disciples didn’t completely understand. If you read further in John, you’ll see that they leaned on their own assumptions and perceptions. They relied on what they saw with their eyes more than they trusted the words of Jesus! They should have trusted Jesus’ instructions!

How is it possible to lose someone significant in your life and “not allow your heart to be troubled or not afraid? I don’t have this figured out yet. What I do know is that Jesus would not give a command that we could not accomplish. He will always provide a way through His power and grace.

And as we know our Father more and more, we are able to tap into an endless supply of joy and peace – no matter what comes our way.

Week Four – Abiding Power

With Sheri Yates

VIDEO MESSAGE NOTES

"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."
John 16:33

What trouble are you facing today?

When trouble comes, there are two ways to handle it:

Abide in *your* strength or abide in God's power.

But he (Jesus) said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." 2 Corinthians 12:9

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

Ephesians 6:10

HOW TO ABIDE IN GOD'S POWER

- Realize you have God's power
 - Know what His authority gives you
 - Stay in His presence
- He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.* Psalm 91:1

Exercise what you have been given

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. James 2:17

So, what trouble are you facing today?

JESUS' NAME IS ABOVE EVERY NAME!

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 1 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. Philippians 2:9-11

MEMORY VERSE

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power.

1 Corinthians 4:20



Week Four – Abiding Power

With Sheri Yates

MEMORY VERSE

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk
but of power.*

1 Corinthians 4:20

DAY ONE– WWW.DO!

Before we start, we must begin with this truth: Abiding authority is never about results – it's about relationship.

If you are seeking God merely for results, you will end up reducing this section of the study to trying to find the “magic formula.” There is no such formula. Formulas use manipulations and we cannot manipulate God.

Jesus never taught the disciples a formula for abiding in their authority. He just told them they had His authority. They didn't always use this authority victoriously because they were mere humans. And like them, we will also run into dealing with our own weaknesses and unbelief.

The authority Christ gave us to do His work for his glory on this earth still exists! It lives in you! To find out how much power is available in Christ, take the time to seek Him personally in both prayer and the Word. Don't go through life without knowing what you have in Christ!

When you know whose you are, who you are and what you have, you will know what to do! I call this [WWW.DO!](#)

Whose – Who – What – DO!

Let's look at the life of Gideon. God told Gideon *whose* He is and *what* he has in Judges 6:12 – “The Lord is with you.” In the same verse, God tells Gideon *who* he is – “Mighty warrior.” Gideon had the Living God with him as his weapon! God also told Gideon what He would do. Because Gideon had the confidence of knowing whose he was, who he was and what he had, he knew that he was able to *do* what God called him to do. Judges 6:16 says, “You (Gideon) will strike down all the Midianites together.”

I spoke with my friend John who recently retired from the police force. As an officer, he knew that he was given authority by the city and state to enforce the law. He had to step into his identity as a policeman, know the weapons he possessed and that he was operating in the authority of the government. Once he understood these essentials, he knew what to do in his position of authority.

WHOSE you are – Do not forget whose you are! You are God's adopted child (Ephesians 1:4-5)!

As a child, regardless of whether your parents are good or bad, you love them because you belong to them. You learn to trust them if they are loving and trustworthy. This is same with God. Growing closer to Him causes your trust in Him to deepen. You begin to see that His love for you and plans for you are far beyond your understanding. Pursue God. Continually seek to know Him better. Stay in love with God and your trust will be in Him alone. **When you know whose you are suddenly you will know who you are.**

WHO you are – As God's child, you are a co-heir with Jesus Christ. You are secure, holy, and blameless in the sight of God. Go to the Obtain Truth study if you want to know more.

My friend John knew who he was. He was a law enforcer. He knew what to do when he saw someone break the law. **When you know who you are you begin to grasp what you have.**

WHAT you have – You have the same Spirit abiding in you that abided in Jesus! You have faith and life-giving power abiding in and for you! You have all you need for life and godliness through the Holy Spirit. You just need to know how to utilize what is yours.

John was given weapons to carry out law enforcement. His greatest weapon, he said, was his uniform. Citizens knew that when they saw the uniform, they needed to abide by the law.

ABIDE

In the same way, your spiritual enemy can recognize the authority of Jesus Christ in you. Remember, you have the armor of God as your uniform.

When you know what you *have*, you will know what to *do*.

DO – John knew that his position gave him specific authority by the city and state. They informed him of the weapons he'd use and how to engage them in order to carry out what he was trained to do.

When you know whose you are, who you are, and what you have, you will know what to do. The Holy Spirit will guide and instruct you.

The abiding authority you have in and through Christ is never about you or the results. It's about a loving God that provides everything for His children and His eternal purposes. We, in turn, glorify Him by using the authority we have been given to do what He calls us to do.

Week Four – Abiding Power

With Sheri Yates

DAY TWO – GOD HAS MY BACK

SEEK GOD

Seek God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength today. Review the memory verse and pray it over yourself. This is your calling! Ask God to help you see with opened eyes and hear His Truth in a new way today!

OBTAIN TRUTH

The scriptures today are very powerful! Read and examine them closely. Let them soak in. Pray for greater understanding. Many people have learned Bible verses by memory but they haven't begun to live them out in their own lives. They don't know the freedom and victory that child-like faith can bring.

Read Luke 10:17-21, James 4:7, 1 John 4:1-6, and Isaiah 54:17.

In your journal, write down what your authority in Christ is under the title, "My Authority in Christ."

ABIDE

Faith comes from hearing God's Word (Romans 10:17). The world, news, friends, family, and other sources will tell you that you just have to make the best of your circumstances, or prepare for the "worst-case scenario."

The truth is that you have something the world doesn't; you have the gift of the Holy Spirit dwelling within. You have same power that raised Christ from the dead!

You can be victorious and overcome in every trial. In Christ, no weapon formed against you will succeed (Isaiah 54:17)!

Many people quote this verse, but they leave out the second half – "and you will silence every tongue that accuses you."

In other words, God has a role: He will turn every weapon used against you for good. You have a role: Silence all accusers. But how and what does this mean?

This does not necessarily mean to defend yourself. God is your defender. To me, it means that if someone (like your evil adversary) tells you that you are no good, sick, poor, defeated, etc., you must remember that God's Word is the truth. You need to know the promises of God and agree with them. It's important for you to discern when lies and physical facts are spoken against or contrary to the Word of God.

When trials, suffering and criticism come your way, I want you to see that God in you is far greater than anything that comes against you! None of these weapons will win. Remember the wave story from the video this week? The waves cannot defeat you when you know you are walking with the One greater than any trouble.

Allow your thoughts to dwell on how big your God is rather than how big your problem is!

One day I realized that I sometimes actually thought my problems were bigger than my God. I think that's idolatry. I worshipped my problems, not God. It was evidence by the amount of time I spent talking about my problems. This revelation penetrated me like a knife when I realized it. The truth is God has my back! – And He has yours. He is bigger than anything you and I are facing.

This truth has changed me! I pray that it changes you too.

MEMORY VERSE

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk
but of power.*

1 Corinthians 4:20

Week Four – Abiding Power

With Sheri Yates

DAY THREE – OPEN MY EYES

SEEK GOD

Pray that the eyes of your heart are opened to truly understand what it means to be an adopted child of God. Pray that you will understand what belongs to you as His child. Review your memory verse and pray it over yourself.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read Ephesians 1:17-23, Colossians 2:10, Matthew 10:1 and 8, Mark 11:20-26, Mark 16:9-18, Isaiah 40:29, Genesis 1:26-28, and John 14:8-14.

Wow! As I prepare this and pour over these verses, I am fired up! I hope you will be too! Go through each verse attentively. In your journal, write down what is yours under the title “What I Have in Christ.”

MEMORY VERSE

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk
but of power.*

1 Corinthians 4:20

ABIDE

Meditate on your notes from today’s lesson. I pray that your heart will experience a greater freedom from the knowledge of God’s truth.

If you then, evil as you are, know how to give good and advantageous gifts to your children, how much more will your Father Who is in heaven [perfect as He is] give good and advantageous things to those who keep on asking Him! Matthew 7:11 (AMP)

Week Four – Abiding Power

With Sheri Yates

DAY FOUR – SUBMIT TO GOD

SEEK GOD

Seek God and ask Him for a deeper revelation and understanding of your abiding authority.

MEMORY VERSE

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk
but of power.*

1 Corinthians 4:20

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read Mark 7:1-13, Matthew 13:53-58, Matthew 8:23-27, James 3:13-16 and 4:1-16

Notice specifically James 4:7 says, “Resist the devil and he will flee from you.” I have heard this verse quoted, in part, many times but most leave out what precedes this instruction: “Submit yourselves to God.” Do resist the enemy, but remember the power to overcome the enemy is because you are submitted to God Almighty!

Your actions can neutralize the power of God in your life. Dig into James 3:13-16 and title a journal page “Ineffective Authority.”

Write down issues that can cause your authority in Christ to be ineffective or neutralized.

Title another journal page, “Effective Living.”

Read John 5:19, John 8:28-29, John 14:8-16, John 15:5, Ephesians 5:1

What made Jesus’ authority effective (besides the fact that He is the Son of God)? What makes your authority in Christ effective? Write down your answers.

ABIDE

Meditate on your notes from today’s lesson. I pray that your heart will experience a greater freedom from the knowledge of God’s truth.

If you then, evil as you are, know how to give good and advantageous gifts to your children, how much more will your Father Who is in heaven [perfect as He is] give good and advantageous things to those who keep on asking Him! Matthew 7:11 (AMP)

Week Four – Abiding Power

With Sheri Yates

DAY FIVE – INCOMPARABLE POWER

SEEK GOD

Seek God and ask Him for a deeper revelation and understanding of your abiding authority.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read Matthew 10 and Luke 9:1-17

Title a journal page “My Mandate.” As you read, write down what authority or jurisdiction was given to the disciples. Recognize that *you* are a disciple of Jesus! You have the *same* authority.

Write down the calling and authorization the disciples were given.

MEMORY VERSE

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk
but of power.*

1 Corinthians 4:20

ABIDE

Carefully consider the verses you’ve just read. Some Christians believe that the power and miracles of God have somehow ended after the days of the “Early Church.” But is this a truth revealed to us through Scripture? Is this what Jesus taught? Have an honest look and allow the Holy Spirit to guide you into all Truth.

You are a disciple (a student-follower) of Jesus; so put yourself in this scene with Him. Ask yourself these of questions:

- How do you think they were able to perform miracles?
- Where did they get their authority?
- How did they know how to use it?
- How did they have the confidence to go out and preach the good news?
- What does Ephesians 1:18-23 mean to you?

What if our lack of seeing the greater works of God were due to our doubt and unbelief? As you think about these things, write down your thoughts. Ask God to reveal to you His truth.

Week Four – Abiding Power

With Sheri Yates

DAY SIX – WALL OF MIRACLES

SEEK GOD

Prepare your heart before your Father to receive all He desires to teach you.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read Acts 3:1-16

My family has been learning to abide in our authority in Christ for a few years now. Sometimes we abide in our authority and others times we don't. Let's just say, we have not arrived.

This past summer my husband casted vision for our family. We were to believe and rely on God more and not be swayed into doubt by our circumstances. Because of this we witnessed over eighty miracles! It was an amazing journey!

We weren't successful in every occasion but we experienced God's love and power in an amazing way.

Recently my 6 year-old child has been under a spiritual attack.

We used John 14:11 to encourage her, "...or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves." We recounted all the powerful acts of God we had seen in the past year. My child's faith was immediately encouraged. We realized in that moment how imperative it is to constantly remember the works of God!

We built a "Wall of Miracles" in our home. This is where we write down a work of God on a post-it note and stick it on our miracle board. When we get discouraged or become complacent we can quickly review the wall and praise God for all that He has done! Talk about encouraging!

ABIDE

This week, build an authority, answered prayer, or miracle wall for your home.

Use some sticky notes or a white board. You may want to sit down with a friend or your family and go through your study notes from this week together before you start. Place your answered prayers and miracles on your wall or board. Celebrate the faithful provision of God in your life.

MEMORY VERSE

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk
but of power.*

1 Corinthians 4:20

ABIDE

CRAVE

If you are truly hungry to understand more about the abiding power of Jesus, I recommend further study in God's word. It's going to take time but I believe your faith will be strengthened, your eyes will be opened and you will be forever transformed by this challenge.

You can pick one or more of the passages below or read through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These are referred to as the four gospels. They depict the life and ministry of Christ.

- Matthew 8
- Matthew 9
- Matthew 12
- Mark 5:25-29
- Mark 10:46-52
- Luke 18:35-43
- Matthew 20:29-34
- John 5:1-9
- Luke 6:17-19

Title a journal page "Authority." As you read, write down what authority was given to the disciples. Recognize that *you* are a disciple of Jesus! You have the *same* Authority.

Title one journal page with the heading, "Miracles."

Answer the following questions:

- How did the miracle occur (was it a touch, a word, not sure, etc.)?
- How many people were healed?
- What did the person do to receive the miracle?
- Make up your own question here.

Week Five – Abiding Hope

With Amy Groeschel

VIDEO MESSAGE NOTES

Because we are one with Jesus, we should live with an _____.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace, as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

What does it mean to hope? Is hope the same as faith?

Faith is confident _____.

Hope is confident _____.

Is your hope really in God? What or who do you depend on?

Circle all that apply:

Myself – my abilities – money – my job – my experiences medicine – an
“expert” – books – food – my relationship(s) exercising – a chemical
substance – weekends / vacations a hobby – possessions – other

WE PUT OUR _____ IN WHAT WE _____.

WE _____ WHAT WE _____.

The disciples needed to KNOW Jesus more!

Jesus was sleeping at the back of the boat with his head on a cushion. The disciples woke him up, shouting, “Teacher, don’t you care that we’re going to drown?” When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Silence! Be still!” Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm. Then he asked them, “Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?” The disciples were absolutely terrified. “Who is this man?” they asked each other. “Even the wind and waves obey him!” Mark 4:35-41

Abraham Knew God!

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as it had been said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. Rom 4:18-21

When I place my hope in GOD...

I can patiently and confidently _____!

Additional Scriptures references: Romans 5:2-5, Hebrews 6:15, James 5:7-11, and Habakkuk 3:17-19

MEMORY VERSE

But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. Romans 8:24-25



Week Five – Abiding Hope

With Amy Groeschel

DAY ONE – PUT YOUR HOPE IN GOD

SEEK GOD

Recite this week’s memory verse aloud two times.

Draw near to God in prayer with your heart filled with a confident and patient hope. Enjoy the richness of His fellowship.

OBTAIN TRUTH

The prophet Isaiah, in Isaiah 40, gives a meaningful perspective of the greatness of God and the frailty of man. We also see the compassion of God towards foolish and wayward hearts.

Read Isaiah 40:25-31 and compile a list in your journal under the heading, “Because God Is... I Can Expect...” You will discover what you can expect from your great God! If time allows, read through the entire chapter for further impact.

ABIDE

Are you more often full of hope or full of worry and fear about the future?

Maybe, like the psalmist in Psalm 42:5, you need to talk to yourself and remember that God is good! Try saying, “*Why, my soul, are you downcast? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.*”

This is living by faith and seeing with eyes of hope! Don’t be emotionally tossed around by life’s circumstances. Put your hope, your expectations in God!

Allow the truth of who God is to correct all your faithless thinking. Write down anything and everything that is disturbing your heart and mind. Align any defeated attitudes with renewed, faith-filled expectations because of who God is.

You will discover that placing your hope in God truly does renew your strength.

MEMORY VERSE

But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. Romans 8:24-25

Week Five – Abiding Hope

With Amy Groeschel

DAY TWO – EAGER ANTICIPATION

SEEK GOD

Recite this week’s memory verse aloud two times. Seek to grasp the greatness of God at a greater depth. Wait patiently in hope for what you do not yet have.

MEMORY VERSE

But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. Romans 8:24-25

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read Romans 8:18-39

Prepare your journal with the title, “In Christ, I Can Expect...”

Read carefully and produce a list of the hope you have. You don’t want to miss a single nugget of truth today! Get ready to be blessed as you realize what you have through Christ!

ABIDE

Some have defined hope as an expectation of coming good. I like this definition. Through our salvation we have unimaginable wonderful future!

I (Amy) have always loved telling my children about their eternal future. I want them to grasp that this world is not their home – that one day (asleep or awake, living or dead) their Savior will come in the clouds and they will fly to meet Him in the air. I want them to remain expectant and ready. We all need to abide in eternal anticipation.

In Ephesians 1:18 and 19, the apostle Paul prayed a heartfelt prayer for us, “*that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe.*”

Pray this prayer to God now as your own heart’s desire.

Look over the list you made from Romans. Steep your mind in the reality of your sure hope. Ask God to enlighten and flood your whole life with these truths.

Write out a prayer in response to all God is revealing to you.

Week Five – Abiding Hope

With Amy Groeschel

DAY THREE – HAPPY TRIALS TO YOU!

SEEK GOD

Recite this week's memory verse aloud two times.

Draw near to God in prayer with your heart filled with a confident and patient hope. Enjoy the richness of His fellowship.

OBTAIN TRUTH

We are going to examine our hope in the midst of trials and suffering today.

Read James 1:2-8, Romans 5:1-11, and 1 Peter 1:3-7 and complete the statement, "I can rejoice because I have..." Record a list of what you've been given in your journal.

ABIDE

"Rejoice in our sufferings" and "Consider it pure joy" when in various trials? Does this sound a little crazy to you? It is unusual but it is God's prescribed way for spiritual maturity.

I would not be the Christ-follower I am today if it were not for my painful trials. Every battle with my sin, fear, sickness, rejection, loss, and daily problems has allowed me to become more like Christ Jesus.

When our faith is in the fire of life's trials and we press on, placing our trust in God, it purifies us, making us more like Him. Trials can cause our hope to soar because we see the truth of His faithfulness at work in and around us. Romans 12:12 says, *"Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer."*

Are you facing your struggles with patience, joy and prayer? You can. You can confidently expect God to work out good in all things for you, His beloved child (Romans 8:28).

If you are not walking in peace and joy, you need to reset your thinking. Renew your attitude with the truth of who God is!

The other day I was terribly disappointed. No. I was fed-up. Done. I'd had enough. I had been waiting for God to answer my prayer to heal my reoccurring bladder infections. When I say waiting, I mean I have been waiting for the past 9 or so years! Well, this day there was no rejoicing in all circumstances going on in my heart. I wanted an end to my problem right then!

I had done *everything* the Bible said to receive healing, as well as prayerfully gone to doctors, taken their meds, taken heaps of natural remedies, listened to and applied "helpful" advice, all to no avail.

God is so good! He is so patient and generous with me. And I am giddy with renewed hope! Why? Did I receive my healing? Maybe. I'm not sure about my tomorrows. But I know that God will be with me in them. My healing may have come. If so, praise God! If not now, I expect all things are working out for my good and for His glory. His grace has *always* been sufficient for me.

My joy left that day because I became impatient. Not any more. I am waiting full of expectation. My God is everything I need. Wait loved one. Wait patiently on Him. Choose to walk His goodness and strength. You can live full of joy because you know, depend and place all hope in your faithful God.

MEMORY VERSE

But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. Romans 8:24-25

Week Five – Abiding Hope

With Amy Groeschel

DAY FOUR – ETERNAL EYES

SEEK GOD

Recite this week’s memory verse aloud two times.

Pursue God in prayer with your heart confident in the hope you have. Savor in the wonder of His fellowship with you.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-5:10

Use the journal entry, “In every trial, I have...” and fill your page with every glorious promise that is yours through Christ.

MEMORY VERSE

But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. Romans 8:24-25

ABIDE

It can be difficult to fix your mind on the eternal when the temporary is so real and ever-present. My days are loaded up with fun and meaningful moments as well as monotonous and dutiful routine. Next, throw in the burden of life’s daily struggles; where’s the time to think eternally?

Keeping your eyes on the unseen is a matter of the heart. When your passion for God is thriving you will overflow with eternal thoughts. You won’t be able to hold them back! The trouble is your circumstances can bombard and distract you from your First Love. Don’t allow it! Stay aware of the roadblocks that stand in the way of your priority relationship.

When a problem arises, I have learned to ask the following questions:

“Will this matter in 100 years?”

“What is the eternal significance of this?”

“Father God, what are you wanting to teach me through this?”

“Father, what do you want me to do?”

These kind of questions place everything in perspective and wisdom begins to take precedence. What do you need to do to keep your mind and heart on Christ? Write your burdens down in your journal. Beside each burden, write what you will do to keep your mind on your hope in Christ.

Week Five – Abiding Hope

With Amy Groeschel

DAY FIVE – SURE AND CERTAIN

SEEK GOD

Recite this week’s memory verse aloud two times.

Pursue God in prayer with your heart confident in the hope you have. Savor in the wonder of His fellowship with you.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Today we’re going to take a look at some men with great faith and hope in God.

Take your journal and use the ABC study method.

Read Genesis 22:1-18, Daniel 3, and Hebrews 6:9-20

“A” is for “A title” - How would you summarize, in a title form, the passage you read?

“B” is for “Best verse” - What was your favorite verse? There is no right or wrong answer.

“C” is for “Calling” - Does this passage call you to live out a certain task?

MEMORY VERSE

But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. Romans 8:24-25

ABIDE

Hebrews 10:23 says, “Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.”

Hold tightly to your hope. Hold on without hesitation. God can be trusted!

- Is there any part of you that lacks complete trust in God?
- What makes you worry and become anxious? Write out every worry that comes to mind.

A lack of trust and an anxious heart is sure evidence of a weak faith and the need to know God more intimately.

I want to have the kind of faith and hope that Abraham and the three Hebrew men had, don’t you? They knew God well and they had resolute, strong faith.

If you are pursuing God and living according to His Word, then you are headed in the right direction! God wants you to look to Him with total trust and patiently wait for His perfect work to be performed. *Expect it.*

Hebrews 11:1 defines what faith is; “Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see.”

CRAVE

Read through Genesis 22 again. Using the title, “Abraham, Man of Faith,” create a list of every faith-filled action that Abraham performed.

Week Six – Abiding Love

With Amy Groeschel & Sheri Yates

DAY ONE – AGAPE LOVE

SEEK GOD

Review notes from this week’s video with Amy and Sheri. Seek God in prayer and ask Him to reveal to you the depth and breadth of His intimate love.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read John 15:9-17 and 1 John 4:9-10

God’s love for you is immeasurable! Title a journal page, “God’s Love for Me.” As you read today’s passages, write down all God reveals about His love for you.

MEMORY VERSE

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. John 15:9

ABIDE

When we first started the SOAR Bible Study, the Abide section was called, “Agape.” We initially chose this because if we have an abiding problem, then we really have a love problem.

John 14:15 says, “If you love me, keep my commands.”

Literally, if you are not walking by God’s voice and obeying His every word to you, this verse reveals the source of your lack of obedience: Your love for God. The solution for a lack of love is to do things that bring intimacy. Don’t take God’s love for granted. Take time to gaze on His beauty through prayer, meditation and reading the Word. Reflect on the grace, forgiveness and love He has lavished on you. Consider the kind of love God has for you.

Not all love is the same: *Eros, phileo and agape* are all Greek words for love.

After you learn about these three Greek words for love, ask God to open your eyes to know His great love for you.

Eros is a romantic kind of love. It is dependent upon the situation and perception, not truth. This kind of love is fickle since it depends on circumstances. This is not a biblical word used for God’s love.

Phileo love is the kind of love we experience in friendships, family, and fellowship with people we enjoy. It is having a feeling of affection in the heart for those we care about. Phileo is one of the New Testament biblical words used for human love.

Agape love is the purest form of love. It is not based on a temporary feeling, but rather rooted in a commitment to love! It is not limited to a situation, circumstance or your perception. This love is often referred to as “unconditional love.”

Eros and phileo types of love are significantly enriched and empowered by God if agape love is our foundation. Responding out of agape love with others is deciding to love regardless of treatment or circumstance.

Agape love is how God loves us!

But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

Understanding that God’s love toward you is not based on a feeling or on what you do for Him, but rather His decision to love you regardless, will transform your life!

We can never earn God’s love – not today, tomorrow or any day! The way you love God, others and yourself will never be the same after you understand this simple (yet profound) truth!

How do you abide in love? You make a decision. You commit to agape love: a love that is not based on feelings or circumstances. Will you do this today? Receive God’s love for you. Choose agape love!

Week Six – Abiding Love

With Amy Groeschel & Sheri Yates

DAY TWO – KNOW GOD, KNOW LOVE

SEEK GOD

Ask the Father to make His love known to you in your heart today.

MEMORY VERSE

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. John 15:9

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read 1 John 4:7-21

We often define love based on a feeling but God's love is different. Read today's text and then divide a journal page in half. On the left side, write "How I Define Love" and produce a list of your own ideas of love. Next, on the right side of the page, describe "How God Defines Love" from the 1 John passage.

ABIDE

Jesus makes a clear statement in 1 John 4, "*Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.*" If you are like me, this statement can come across pretty strong and disturbing. I have had my share of unloving thoughts and actions toward people.

What exactly is Jesus saying here? Is He really saying that when I don't think, talk or act out of love that I don't know God? As piercing as it is, I believe the answer is yes. Jesus' blunt statement leaves little room or need for interpretation.

When my first daughter was born I realized that there were not enough books or advice to prepare me for the first time the doctors laid her across my lap. I am pretty sure I said out loud, "What am I suppose to do with her now?"

Before long, I could tell what she needed by the tone of her cry. As I began to know her more intimately, I naturally knew how to demonstrate to her the love and care she required. Growing older, she quickly learned that her daddy and me need her obedience in order for us to guide and protect her. Love is beautifully given and received when we respectfully submit to one another.

Just like the intimacy of a parent/child relationship, you should strive to gain a deeper understanding of God. You'll discover how much He is worthy of love and humbly desire to do what pleases Him. I believe we all need to hear the message of "knowing God more" again and again. The SOAR study repeatedly challenges you to give God quality and quantity secret time each day. You'll soon stand in awe of how much your heart has become like His.

Week Six – Abiding Love

With Amy Groeschel & Sheri Yates

DAY THREE – MY FATHER’S EYES

SEEK GOD

Ask your Heavenly Father today to help you see people the way He sees them. Ask Him to help you love others the way He loves them.

OBTAIN TRUTH

The elder, to my dear friend Gaius, whom I love in the truth. 3 John 1:1

This verse blows me away! John didn’t say, “I love you for all the wonderful things you have done.” He didn’t say, “I have deep feelings toward you.” No. He said, “Whom I love in the truth.”

What is the “truth?” The truth is Jesus and the Word of God.

What he is essentially saying here is that he loves Gaius through God’s eyes. He loves him because he sees him as God sees him. Are you grasping this?

John had to know how much God loved him in order to love others with God’s love. You and I need to wholly realize His love for us too if we want the God-kind of love to pour out of us.

Let’s review how God views you from SOAR – Obtain Truth:

- You are blessed in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. (Ephesians 1:3)
- He chose you in Him before the creation of the world. (Ephesians 1:4)
- You are holy and blameless in His sight. (Ephesians 1:4)
- In His love, He predestined you to be adopted through Jesus Christ.
- He has freely given you His grace. (Ephesians 1:6)
- You have redemption in Him through Christ. (Ephesians 1:7)
- You are forgiven. (Ephesians 1:7)
- He has made known the mystery of his will to you. (Ephesians 1:9)
- You are chosen and have been predestined according to His plan. (Ephesians 1:11)
- You were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing your inheritance (Ephesians 1:14)
- God has great love for you (Ephesians 2:4)
- You have been saved by His grace. (Ephesians 2:5)
- You have been saved by grace, through faith – and this not from yourself, it is the gift of God – not by works. (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- You are God's masterpiece. (Ephesians 2:10)

Are you beginning to see the point? John knew how much God loved him. Because of that, he was able show love to Gaius and others with God’s extreme kind of love.

MEMORY VERSE

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. John 15:9

ABIDE

Learn to see yourself and others through God's eyes.

Thank God for His amazing love for you. Choose to see others through God's love.

If someone cuts you off in traffic, think to yourself, "Jesus, my Savior, loves them so much that He died for their sins." You may be thinking, "How should I treat people who are not Christians?" God loves all the people in the world. Jesus died for the sins of the whole world...not just yours. (1 John 2:2) God desires all people to be saved!

"God our Savior, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." 1Timothy 2:1

We need to be His hands and feet by choosing to love all people. Your actions could be the first encounter with Jesus than many unsaved people have. They will see Jesus and know Him through your love for them and for your brothers and sisters. They should want what we have!

Our attitude should be, "I choose to bless those who mistreat me and do everything in love."

When you are tempted to become offended or angry with someone, remember that you are called to forgive as Christ has forgiven you. This will shut your lips in a hurry.

When I began to see others through God's eyes, everything changed. I didn't see my husband's faults through eyes of criticism (although sometimes I still do), but rather, I look at Him and think, "God thinks you are a masterpiece!" When I do this, it *changes me!* It changes how I respond to Him!

When I began to love others based on truth, I became a mighty encourager! People tell me all the time what a great encourager I am. I don't really see it, but what I do see is people that God loves. I just want to be a vessel to help others see God's love for them!

I like to encourage people based on truth, not on performance. The world shows love and encouragement based on performance. When you are performing by the world's standards they may encourage and love you. When you are not measuring up, you get a big, fat helping of discouragement. That's not God's kind of love and it shouldn't be ours either.

We get enough performance-based, circumstantial love from the world!

Week Six – Abiding Love

With Amy Groeschel & Sheri Yates

DAY FOUR – CHOOSE LOVE

SEEK GOD

Allow yourself time to be still before the Father. Quiet yourself and ask Him to fill you with His fruit of love.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read 1 Corinthians 13

Our study of abiding love would not be complete without examining this famous agape chapter in scripture. Divide a journal page with the following two topics: “Love Is” and “Love Isn’t.” Record all your findings about love under the appropriate heading. Also, notice the powerful verses directly before and after chapter 13.

MEMORY VERSE

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. John 15:9

ABIDE

Using your notes, place a check mark by the attributes that you exemplify in a typical day.

I can tell you personally that this chapter always convicts me! No matter how far I’ve come in living a life of love, I continue to fail. I fall short of consistently showing God’s pure agape love. Here’s the great news - if God resides in you, you have the very Source of love *living in you*. Christ is your life! Just live out of the overflowing Love that is already within. Get this. This whole agape love thing... It is not you! It’s Him. Allow His loving nature to flow through you. Choose to walk in it. Love is God’s holy calling for us.

Do not get discouraged by the process! Understand that He is at work as the Author and Finisher of your faith. And of your brothers and sisters in Christ, too! Take a look at this wonderful passage in 1 John:

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure. 1 John 3:1-3

Give up on trying to love in your own strength. Apart from Christ, you cannot truly love. Rest in the power of Christ in you! Don’t get down on yourself. But simply give up on yourself. Die to your self-efforts and rely on Christ!

I have a favorite verse that I say on a regular basis. It guides my heart and mind to be in alignment with the mind of the Spirit. This is the verse I choose to submit to: *The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love. Galatians 5:6*

When I become offended or annoyed by someone (usually, this is a family member), before reacting in an unloving manner, I mentally rehearse this scripture and yield my heart to God’s will.

Just yesterday, I had many opportunities to respond unlovingly towards my family. A trail of dirt from muddy shoes went *all* through the house, a request I gave was ignored and keeping all my fun-loving kids quiet during a school lesson was next to impossible. There’s more to tell, but I think you get the point.

I wish I could tell you that in every situation I was gentle in my reproach. Irritability is an ugly thing. But there were some moments of great victory, too. There were occasions when I chose to obey God and express my faith by showing love. I chose to forgive and not mention the dirty floor and the ignored request. It felt so much better than airing my grievances! The “teaching” lesson can wait for another time. What Bible verse can you commit to memory today to be your reminder to follow the way of love?

Week Six – Abiding Love

With Amy Groeschel & Sheri Yates

DAY FIVE – LOVE UNIFIES

SEEK GOD

Don't allow anything to stand in your way of spending some quite moments with God each day. Give all your heart, soul, mind and strength to your loving Father in prayer. Enjoy and delight yourself in Him. Ask God to reveal Himself and His truth as you study today.

OBTAIN TRUTH

Read Romans 13:8-14, Romans 14 and Romans 15:1-7

Identify the characteristics of love in Romans today by compiling a list again under the headings, "Love Is" and "Love Is Not." I recommend that you first read through Chapter 14 without stopping and then recording your findings.

ABIDE

It is vital for the body of Christ to abide in love! Unity, sincere love and concern for other believers is God's heart and Jesus' prayer in John 17:20-23. We, as the Body of Christ, are a beautiful, Spirit-empowered extension of Christ Jesus, who is our Head. We have one Lord, one faith and one baptism. We are a family!

All around the world the Family of God is working together to lift the oppressed and assist, feed, and care for the sick and impoverished. We are intentionally prayerful, sacrificially giving, lovingly serving, powerfully preaching, thoughtfully teaching and passionately fulfilling the Great Commission. We help serve the persecuted and the orphans. We create new books, blogs, movies, music, websites and other tools to equip each other for ministry.

It is absolutely amazing! I am in awe of the work of Christ in His Church! I truly love the Church! I love my Family!

You may hold similar affections. But is our love always sincere? Do we always do what leads to peace? Do we intentionally encourage one another and place each other in higher esteem than ourselves? We have an unending debt to demonstrate Christ's love!

I have witnessed much pride and self-promotion in Christ's Body. Debates and arguments over methods that are not essential to salvation have divided many. I've witnessed the truth that knowledge puffs up. Even more upsetting to me is that I have been guilty of doing many of the same things. I have looked down upon others who've disagreed with me. I have held grudges and gossiped. Have you done something similar? Brothers and sisters this should not be! It grieves my heart deeply. I know it grieves our Lord and Savior much more to see His children not getting along. Love builds up! Jesus declared our main role or assignment while living on Earth in John 13.

Jesus proclaimed, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." John 13:34,35

If there is an area of sin in that the Holy Spirit is convicting you of, write it down. Admit your sin to God and turn from it. The grace and mercy of God awaits you. Healing and restoration awaits you.

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. James 5:16

The most appropriate way to end our study on love is to abide by the life-giving words of the apostle Paul.

He simply instructs, "Do everything in love." I Corinthians 16:14

MEMORY VERSE

As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. John 15:9

ABIDE

CRAVE

Pray this for yourself daily. Commit to pray it for a certain length of time (maybe 1 week, 1 month, 6 months or 1 year). We believe God will change you through this.

I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen. Ephesians 3:17-21

AFTER THE STUDY

Your journey in obtaining truth doesn't have to stop here. Our prayer is that you will desire to continue studying God's Word on your own (or with a small group) to attain even more revelation of God's truth. The Scripture is active and alive. If you choose to seek it, it will meet you where you are and bring life to your circumstances. There are infinite revelations to be found in the Word. It is a treasure waiting to be sought out!

Instead of starting a different Bible study, try grabbing a new journal and read the Word as if you were on a treasure hunt.

Consider taking a tour through the gospel books.

Read through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. These are referred to as the four gospels. They depict the life and ministry of Christ.

Consider the following journal headings:

"Lessons from a Miracle of Jesus"

"How Did Jesus Abide?"

"Jesus' Love"

"The Kingdom of God"

"Lessons from the Life of ..."

"Faith"

"My Authority"

"My Hope"

"What did Jesus Do?"

"My calling"

Try making up your own journal page headings. This is what we do. As we see a consistent theme, we write it at the top of our page. Then write down all the truths in that theme. Enjoy this great study method!