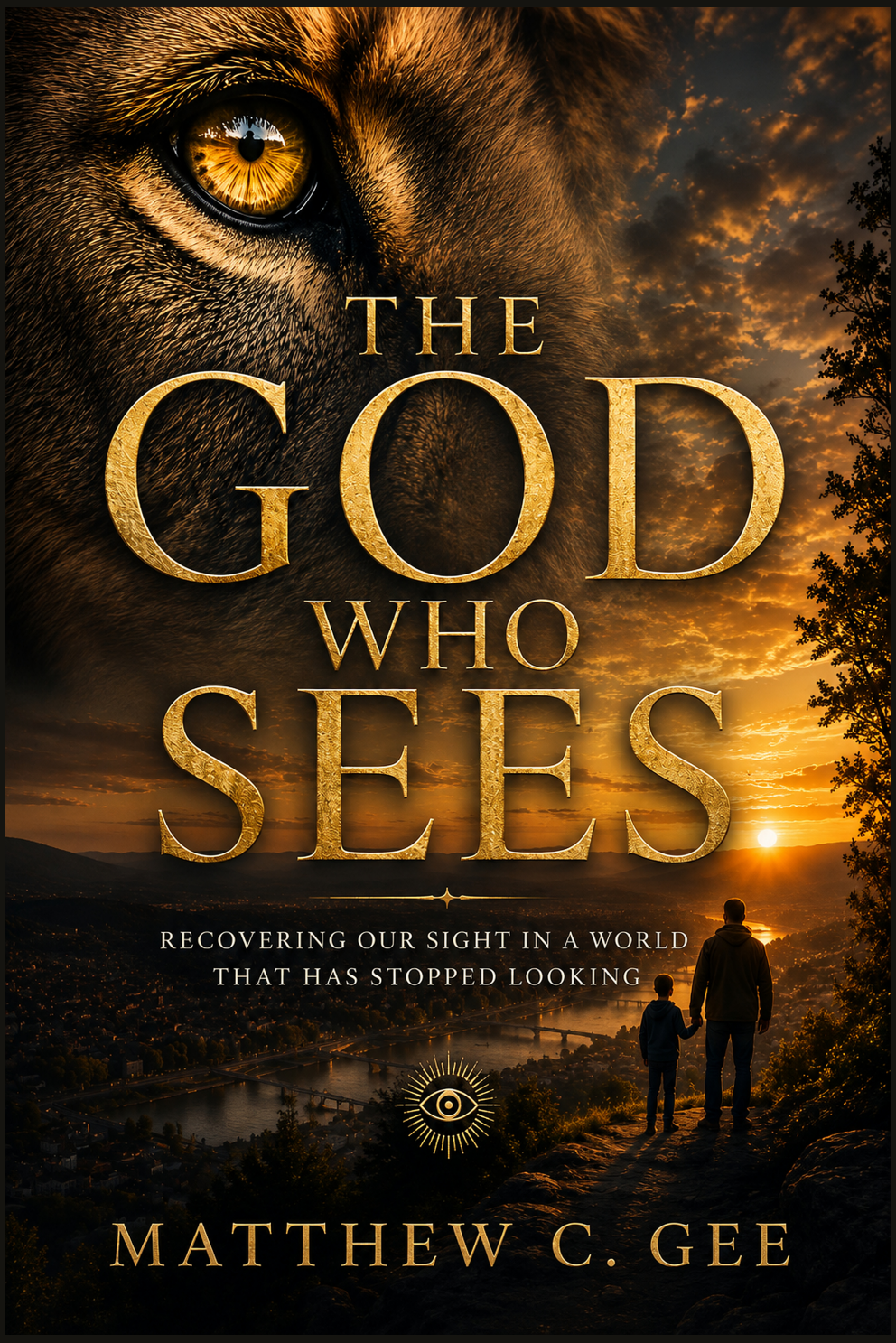
SIX WEEK BIBLE STUDY



PARTICIPANT WORKBOOK AND LEADER GUIDE

SCRIPTURE / CONVERSATION / DAILY PRACTICE

The God Who Sees

A Six Week Bible Study

Matthew C. Gee

Companion to *The God Who Sees: Recovering Our Sight in a World That Has Stopped Looking*

Copyright © 2026 Matthew C. Gee. All rights reserved.

This workbook brings the book's thirteen chapters into six sessions for adult small groups. It includes teaching reflections, discussion questions, personal readings, practical exercises, and guidance for leaders.

Scripture passages are identified by reference and are intended to be read from your own Bible. The NIV is recommended for shared readings. The teaching and prayers are original study material rather than extended quotations from a Bible translation.

THIS WORKBOOK BELONGS TO

GROUP AND MEETING DATES

Print edition • November 2026

matthewcgee.com

An Invitation to Begin

Across six weeks, we will examine the ways we overlook people, encounter the God who sees, and practice a more faithful way of living with one another. The aim is to let Scripture shape our understanding of God and our treatment of the people in front of us.

You may come with a settled Christian faith, a long list of questions, or a history that makes religious language difficult to trust. There is room to be honest here. This is a Christian Bible study, and it will speak plainly about Jesus, sin, grace, and resurrection. You do not need to pretend that you believe something in order to participate. Bring your questions, read carefully, and allow other people the same freedom.

Our work begins with receiving God’s attention and grace. From there, we will examine our own habits and consider how love becomes practical. We will not finish by knowing every answer. We can finish with a clearer understanding of the biblical passages, greater honesty about ourselves, and a few commitments we are prepared to keep.

How to use this workbook

Bring a Bible, this workbook, and something to write with. Read the assigned book chapters before each meeting if possible. You can still participate if you have not finished the reading.

Allow 60-75 minutes for each meeting and about 10 minutes for each personal reading. Each session has six discussion questions. For a shorter meeting, choose questions 1, 3, 4, and 6.

The personal reflections follow each group meeting. The final week’s readings begin the work of continuing these practices beyond the study. The leader guide begins on page 41.

Before we begin

What do you hope to understand, receive, or change during these six weeks?

Our Six Weeks Together

01 When We Stop Seeing / page 5

Introduction and chapters 1-2: The Figures at the Edge and A Nation of Strangers.

02 The People We Write Off / page 11

Chapters 3-4: The Comfort of Contempt and Symptoms and Stories.

03 Seen in the Wilderness / page 17

Chapters 5-6: El Roi and The Garden.

04 Jesus Sees the Whole Person / page 23

Chapters 7-8: The Man Who Saw People and The Image No One Can Revoke.

05 A Place at the Table / page 29

Chapters 9-10: The Table and Crossing the Road.

06 Seeing the Nearest Face / page 35

Chapters 11-13: The Nearest Face, Gardens in the Ruins, and The Ninety Percent. Read the Epilogue as a closing reflection.

A simple meeting rhythm

Welcome and practice review, 10 minutes. Scripture and teaching, 15 minutes. Discussion, 25 minutes. Group exercise, 10 minutes. Next step and prayer, 5 minutes.

The way we will meet

• Speak from your own experience. Make room for someone who has not spoken. Ask before assuming.

• Passing is always allowed. No one has to disclose painful experiences, pray aloud, or make a public faith statement.

• Treat personal stories with care. Ask permission before repeating them. Do not promise secrecy when someone’s safety requires help.

• Disagree without demeaning. Read the passage before applying it. Separate what the text says from what we infer.



W e e k O n e

When We Stop Seeing

Book reading Introduction and chapters 1-2: The Figures at the Edge and A Nation of Strangers.

Read together Psalm 139:1-18, 23-24

God knows us beyond the versions of ourselves we present. Being known by Him invites us to become more attentive to the people around us.

In the opening of The God Who Sees, a museum visit becomes a picture of a larger problem. Two small figures were already in the painting, but slowing down changed what could be seen. We can pass through our relationships the same way. We recognize a face, know a role, and assume we know the person. Familiarity can make us less curious when it should make us more attentive.

Psalm 139 begins with the conviction that God knows the speaker closely. His movements, thoughts, words, and hidden places are not beyond God’s attention. The psalm does not describe an audience impressed by a performance. It describes the presence of One who knows the person before the performance begins. That kind of knowledge can comfort us, but it can also expose the parts of ourselves we would rather keep hidden.

The closing prayer matters. The psalmist invites God to search him and lead him. Being known is not permission to remain unchanged. It makes room for honesty and direction. We can bring our motives into the light because God’s knowledge is deeper than the image we work so hard to maintain.

Many of us have contact with people all day and still struggle to be known. We exchange information without asking how someone is carrying it. We notice a missed deadline without knowing about a difficult night. Listening will not answer every problem, but it can correct our assumption that the part we see is the whole story.

This week begins with attention, including attention to our own limits. We cannot know another person as God does. We can stop pretending that we already do. We can ask a sincere question, allow time for an answer, and resist turning someone’s answer into a story about ourselves. The first practice is simple enough to begin today: slow down long enough to notice who is already there.

Read and Reflect

Begin together Think of someone who made you feel noticed in an ordinary moment. What did that person actually do?

1. In verses 1-6, what ordinary details of life does the psalmist say God knows? What does that reveal about the kind of attention being described?

2. What do verses 7-12 add to the picture? Which image of God’s presence stands out to you, and why?

3. How do verses 23-24 connect being known with being changed? What might make that prayer difficult?

Consider Your Response

Look first at the passage, then consider your own response. You may pass on any personal question.

4. Where do you experience a difference between having contact with people and being known by them?

5. Whom do you tend to recognize mainly by a role, a task, or an old impression? What might you be missing?

6. For those who are unsure about faith, what is appealing or unsettling about a God who knows you fully? For believers, where does your life reflect that belief?

Put It Into Practice

Practice together

In pairs, take two minutes each to answer: What has been taking most of your attention lately? The listener may ask one clarifying question but should not give advice. Then summarize what you heard and ask whether you understood correctly. Share only what your partner permits.

Practice this week

Choose one ordinary conversation each day. Put distractions away, ask one sincere question, and allow the answer to finish. Notice what you learn without keeping a score of how well the other person responds.

Closing prayer

God, You know the parts of us we show and the parts we hide. Help us be honest with You. Slow our attention enough to notice the people in front of us, and teach us to listen with humility. Amen.

My next step and when I will begin

What I need to remember or ask for

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 1 / Being known

Read Psalm 139:1-6

Which detail of God’s knowledge brings comfort? Which makes you uneasy? Write an honest response without trying to make it sound religious.

Day 2 / Being present

Read Psalm 139:7-12

Name a place or season in which you have felt alone. What does this passage claim about God’s presence there? Sit with that claim before deciding how you feel about it.

Day 3 / Being made

Read Psalm 139:13-18

What qualities do you usually use to judge your own value? Consider what changes when your life is understood as known by God before other people evaluate it.

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 4 / Being connected

Read Genesis 2:18-25

Read the passage in its setting of human companionship and marriage. What does it help you notice about our need for relationship? Reach out to someone you have allowed to drift out of view.

Day 5 / Being searched

Read Psalm 139:23-24

Return to the closing prayer. Name one habit that keeps you from noticing others. Choose one specific adjustment for the coming week, then ask God for help to make it.

Before the next meeting

What did I notice? What was difficult? What question or next step do I want to bring with me?



Week Two

The People We Write Off

Book reading Chapters 3-4: The Comfort of Contempt and Symptoms and Stories.

Read together Luke 15:1-2, 11-32

God’s grace challenges both our wrongdoing and our belief that another person is beneath our care.

Contempt can feel satisfying. It gives us someone to blame, someone to laugh at, and a quick way to feel better about ourselves. The book asks us to examine that satisfaction honestly. The question is personal: What happens inside me when another person becomes a category I no longer have to understand?

Luke tells us who is listening before Jesus tells the story of the two sons. Some people are coming near to hear Him. Others are complaining that He welcomes sinners and eats with them. The story therefore speaks both to people who know they have failed and to people who believe their faithfulness should place them above the failures of others.

The younger son wastes what he has been given and returns acknowledging his sin. His father meets him with compassion and restores him to the household. The older son is angry and refuses to enter the celebration. He describes his own obedience and his brother’s failure as evidence that the welcome is unfair. The father goes out to him too. Both sons are addressed within a relationship the father wants them to receive.

We may recognize ourselves in either son, sometimes within the same day. We want mercy for the history behind our mistakes and a strict accounting of someone else’s. Grace interrupts that arrangement. It does not make wrongdoing harmless. It challenges the assumption that we can understand a person completely by listing what they have done wrong.

Chapter 4 carries this question into human suffering. A symptom, a crisis, or a difficult interaction is part of a life rather than its full explanation. We can take harm seriously and still remain curious about the person involved. We can support accountability without humiliation. The practical work this week is to notice when we have stopped asking questions because we prefer the judgment we have already made. Then we can begin again, remembering that we too are people who need grace.

Read and Reflect

Begin together Without naming a person or political group, what is the difference between disagreeing with someone and looking down on them?

1. What complaint in verses 1-2 frames the parable? How does knowing the audience change the way you hear it?

2. In verses 17-24, what does the younger son acknowledge, and how does the father respond? What is restored?

3. In verses 25-30, what does the older son believe his obedience should earn him? What does he seem unable to celebrate?

Consider Your Response

Look first at the passage, then consider your own response. You may pass on any personal question.

4. How does the father respond to the older son in verses 28-32? What remains unresolved when the story ends?

5. When has being right become more important to you than treating someone with dignity? What did that attitude give you in the moment?

6. What would accountability without contempt look like in an ordinary conflict? Name one behavior that would need to change in you.

Put It Into Practice

Practice together

Privately complete two sentences: I am quickest to dismiss people when… and The story I have not asked about is…. In pairs, discuss the habit without naming the person. Help each other identify one honest question that could replace an assumption. Do not explain away harmful behavior.

Practice this week

For seven days, pause before sharing a mocking post or repeating a contemptuous description. State the concern in factual language without an insult. If you have already spoken unfairly, make a specific correction where it is appropriate.

Closing prayer

Father, we need the mercy we are sometimes reluctant to offer. Show us where pride has narrowed our sight. Help us name wrongdoing truthfully, receive Your grace, and treat others as people rather than targets. Amen.

My next step and when I will begin

What I need to remember or ask for

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 1 / The complaint

Read Luke 15:1-2

Whose welcome would you struggle to celebrate? You do not need to name that person publicly. Write down what you fear would be lost if that person received mercy.

Day 2 / The return

Read Luke 15:11-24

Notice both the son’s acknowledgment of sin and the father’s welcome. Where do you need to stop rehearsing excuses and speak honestly about your own responsibility?

Day 3 / The yard

Read Luke 15:25-32

What grievance keeps the older son outside? Identify one comparison that feeds resentment in you. What might it mean to receive love without making someone else deserve less?

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 4 / The whole person

Read Mark 2:13-17

Observe whom Jesus calls and eats with. His response includes a need for healing and a welcome for sinners. Where have you treated a label as a complete account of a life?

Day 5 / The correction

Read Matthew 5:21-24

Consider how Jesus addresses anger, contemptuous speech, and reconciliation. Identify a repair you can responsibly begin. Acknowledge your own action without adding an accusation to your apology.

Before the next meeting

What did I notice? What was difficult? What question or next step do I want to bring with me?



W e e k T h r e e

Seen in the Wilderness

Book reading Chapters 5-6: El Roi and The Garden.

Read together Genesis 16:1-16; read Genesis 21:8-21 for the later encounter

God’s attention reaches a person whom others use and overlook. We can bring our real circumstances to Him without pretending they are already resolved.

Hagar’s story does not begin in a place of power. She is an Egyptian slave in Abram and Sarai’s household. Decisions about her life and body are made within that unequal relationship. After conflict and harsh treatment, she flees. Reading the passage slowly requires us to see her as a person rather than an obstacle in someone else’s family story.

The angel of the Lord finds her near a spring and addresses her by name. Hagar is asked where she has come from and where she is going. She answers, receives a difficult instruction and a promise, and responds by naming the Lord as the God who sees her. Her testimony gives the book its title. A person pushed toward the edge of the story has encountered God’s attention there.

We should allow the difficult instruction in verse 9 to remain difficult. Hagar is told to return. This particular narrative is not a general command for people to remain in danger or return to an abusive relationship. Faithful reading notices both what happens in the passage and what we must not require of someone else on its basis. A group can honor Scripture while admitting that it has not resolved every question the story raises.

Genesis 21 tells of another wilderness encounter years later. Hagar and Ishmael are again vulnerable. God hears, speaks, and opens Hagar’s eyes to a well. His care meets an actual need. We should not use this scene to blame people for failing to notice a solution or to promise that every crisis will end in the same way.

The book’s garden chapter widens the lens: human life begins in God’s creative generosity, and human sin brings hiding and broken relationship. Yet God addresses the people who hide. We are invited to come honestly before Him, including with questions. This week, being seen means more than being admired. It means our actual lives matter, including the circumstances we would never choose and the needs we cannot solve alone.

Read and Reflect

Begin together What makes it easier to tell someone the truth about a difficult season? Share a quality of the listener rather than a story you would prefer to keep private.

1. What does Genesis 16:1-6 reveal about Hagar’s circumstances and the power held by other people in the household?

2. What happens in verses 7-8 before the instruction in verse 9? What does Hagar have the opportunity to say?

3. What does Hagar’s response in verse 13 tell us about how she understands the encounter? What questions does the passage leave with you?

Consider Your Response

Look first at the passage, then consider your own response. You may pass on any personal question.

4. Compare Genesis 16 with Genesis 21:14-20. What forms does God’s care take? What has not become easy for Hagar?

5. How do you respond to the difference between being seen by God and having every circumstance immediately changed?

6. Where could you help someone be heard or receive practical support without making decisions for them or asking them to disclose more than they want?

Put It Into Practice

Practice together

Write privately: What I wish someone understood is…. You may share, summarize, or pass. If you share, the listener should ask, Would you like me simply to listen, pray with you, or help you consider support? Practice respecting the answer.

Practice this week

Notice someone whose work or presence you usually take for granted. Offer specific appreciation and, if welcome, ask what would make their day easier. Honor their time and their answer. Do not turn the interaction into a project or a photograph.

Closing prayer

God who sees, meet us in the places where we feel overlooked. Give us courage to tell the truth, wisdom to seek help, and patience with questions we cannot yet answer. Make us attentive to people whose voices are too often missed. Amen.

My next step and when I will begin

What I need to remember or ask for

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 1 / The household

Read Genesis 16:1-6

List what the text says about Hagar’s circumstances. Separate those observations from what you imagine she may have felt. What changes when you read with her experience in view?

Day 2 / The encounter

Read Genesis 16:7-14

Notice the address, the questions, the instruction, the promise, and Hagar’s response. Write one honest question you would bring to God about this encounter.

Day 3 / The second wilderness

Read Genesis 21:8-21

Observe who is heard, what is provided, and what happens afterward. What practical need in your own life could you name to a trustworthy person this week?

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 4 / The beginning

Read Genesis 1:26-31; 2:15-18

Consider humanity’s creation, work, and need for companionship. Which part of your worth have you tied too tightly to usefulness or performance?

Day 5 / The hiding

Read Genesis 3:8-13

Watch how fear, hiding, and blame appear in the conversation. What are you tempted to hide or explain away? Write a prayer that names it without shifting responsibility.

Before the next meeting

What did I notice? What was difficult? What question or next step do I want to bring with me?



Week Four

Jesus Sees the Whole Person

Book reading Chapters 7-8: The Man Who Saw People and The Image No One Can Revoke.

Read together Mark 10:46-52 and Romans 5:6-11

Jesus responds to people whom the crowd dismisses. His death and resurrection ground Christian hope in God's saving love rather than our usefulness or performance.

Bartimaeus is beside the road when he hears that Jesus is passing. He calls out for mercy. The crowd tries to silence him, but Jesus stops and has him called forward. He asks Bartimaeus what he wants. The person others have treated as an interruption is given room to speak. After receiving his sight, Bartimaeus follows Jesus along the road.

The encounter gives us a practical question about our own help: Have we listened to the person we intend to serve? We may notice a need accurately and still assume too much about the person carrying it. Respect includes asking, hearing, and making room for someone's agency. Being able to help does not give us ownership of another person's life.

The book connects these encounters with the conviction that every person bears God's image. Someone's worth is not suspended when that person becomes dependent, fails publicly, or has nothing useful to offer us. This claim also reaches inward. Many of us defend other people's dignity while treating our own limitations as evidence that we have become less worthy of love.

Romans 5 takes the study beyond an example of compassionate behavior. Paul describes Christ's death for people who were powerless and sinful, and reconciliation with God while they were His enemies. Christian hope rests in the action of God toward people who could not establish their own innocence. The gospel includes Jesus' death for sins and His resurrection, as summarized in 1 Corinthians 15:3-8. His care is personal, but it is also saving.

Our response is therefore more than a resolution to become nicer. We are invited to trust Christ, turn from sin, and live in the grace we have received. People exploring faith can examine that claim honestly without pretending agreement. For all of us, the next conversation can become a place to practice humility: ask what matters, listen to the answer, and refuse to measure a life only by what it can produce.

Read and Reflect

Begin together When someone wants to help you, what makes you feel respected rather than managed?

1. Trace the crowd's actions and Jesus' actions in Mark 10:46-52. Where do their responses differ?

2. What does Jesus ask Bartimaeus? What does the passage show about Bartimaeus' own voice and response?

3. In Romans 5:6-11, how does Paul describe the people for whom Christ died? What does God do for them?

Consider Your Response

Look first at the passage, then consider your own response. You may pass on any personal question.

4. How does this account of grace challenge the belief that we must become useful or impressive before we can be loved?

5. Where might your efforts to help have crowded out another person’s choices? What would listening change?

6. What response do these passages invite from you: trust, repentance, a changed habit, or a question you need to explore further?

Put It Into Practice

Practice together

Use this scenario: An older neighbor who recently stopped driving declines your first offer of help. In pairs, practice asking what would actually be helpful. Discuss how to respect a refusal and keep a welcome open without pressure. Do not assign motives to the neighbor.

Practice this week

Before offering advice or arranging help, ask what the person needs and whether they want your involvement. Then offer one realistic form of support. Notice any desire to be thanked, needed, or in control, and bring that motive honestly to God.

Closing prayer

Jesus, thank You for meeting us in need and for giving Yourself for our reconciliation with God. Teach us to receive Your grace and to respect the people we serve. Help us listen before assuming and love without making usefulness the price. Amen.

My next step and when I will begin

What I need to remember or ask for

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 1 / The voice beside the road

Read Mark 10:46-52

Read once for what Bartimaeus does and once for what Jesus does. Where are you tempted to let a crowd decide who deserves your attention?

Day 2 / The image

Read Genesis 1:26-27; James 3:9-10

James connects our speech about people with their being made in God’s likeness. Identify one phrase you use about yourself or others that you need to reconsider.

Day 3 / The love that comes first

Read Romans 5:6-11

Observe the conditions in which God acts toward us. Write what you believe this passage says about grace, and one question you still have.

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 4 / The risen Christ

Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-8, 20-22

Notice the central claims about Jesus' death and resurrection. How does the Christian claim of resurrection change the hope being offered beyond being remembered or admired?

Day 5 / The response

Read Ephesians 2:8-10

Observe the relationship between grace, faith, and good works. Name one act of care that could flow from gratitude rather than the need to prove that you are good.

Before the next meeting

What did I notice? What was difficult? What question or next step do I want to bring with me?



Week Five

A Place at the Table

Book reading Chapters 9-10: The Table and Crossing the Road.

Read together Luke 19:1-10 and Luke 10:25-37

Jesus’ welcome calls us toward repentance, and His teaching calls us to become neighbors through concrete mercy.

Zacchaeus wants to see Jesus, but the encounter becomes more personal than he expected. Jesus addresses him and announces that He will stay at his house. The crowd objects to the company Jesus has chosen. Zacchaeus speaks of generosity and repayment, and Jesus declares that salvation has come to the household. Welcome and changed conduct belong together in the scene.

The book’s table is a place where people can be encountered at close range. We can offer hospitality while remaining honest about right and wrong. We can listen without agreeing, and we can be kind without pretending a wound did not happen. A meal is not a reward for becoming like us. It can be a setting in which we finally learn what we had only assumed.

The Good Samaritan presses the question further. A lawyer asks Jesus about eternal life and then asks who his neighbor is. Jesus tells of an injured traveler, two people who pass by, and a Samaritan who stops. The care includes approaching, tending wounds, transportation, lodging, and payment. Compassion becomes action that costs something.

Jesus ends by asking which traveler became a neighbor to the wounded man. The movement of the question matters. We are asked to consider the kind of person we will become toward someone in need. We cannot complete that work by identifying the people we already like or the people most likely to appreciate us.

Our response does not require grand gestures or unlimited availability. It requires attention joined to responsible action. A shared meal, a ride arranged with permission, a kept appointment, or a contribution to trusted local work can express care. The recipient should have a voice in what happens. This week, choose one act that makes your welcome tangible. Let it be small enough to keep, specific enough to matter, and free of a demand that the other person reward you with agreement.

Read and Reflect

Begin together What makes a welcome feel sincere? Think about ordinary hospitality rather than the size of a home or the quality of a meal.

1. In Luke 19:1-10, what does Jesus do, how does the crowd respond, and what does Zacchaeus say he will do?

2. How does this encounter hold welcome and responsibility together? What would be lost if either disappeared?

3. In Luke 10:25-29, what is the lawyer asking, and what motive does the text name in verse 29?

Consider Your Response

Look first at the passage, then consider your own response. You may pass on any personal question.

4. List the Samaritan’s actions in verses 33-35. Which involve attention, time, resources, or continued responsibility?

5. Compare the lawyer’s question in verse 29 with Jesus’ question in verse 36. How does the change challenge your usual approach to helping?

6. What concrete act of welcome or mercy is within your capacity this week? What should you ask before deciding what someone else needs?

Put It Into Practice

Practice together

As a group, plan one possible act of hospitality or service. Identify whom it could benefit, how their preferences will be heard, what you can realistically offer, and who will follow through. Keep participation voluntary. Choose a smaller commitment if the larger one is unlikely to last.

Practice this week

Invite someone to an accessible conversation or meal, or offer a specific form of help with permission. Ask about their life before discussing your conclusions. Afterward, record what you learned and whether a follow-up was requested. Do not treat agreement as the measure of success.

Closing prayer

Lord, make our welcome honest and our compassion practical. Help us cross the distances we have chosen to keep. Give us humility to ask, courage to act, and faithfulness to keep the commitments we make. Amen.

My next step and when I will begin

What I need to remember or ask for

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 1 / The unexpected guest

Read Luke 19:1-7

Whom does the crowd believe Jesus should avoid? Consider a person you find difficult to welcome. What fear, conviction, or assumption sits beneath that response?

Day 2 / The changed response

Read Luke 19:8-10

Notice how generosity and repayment appear in Zacchaeus' words. Where might your response to grace include making something right rather than only feeling differently?

Day 3 / The boundary question

Read Luke 10:25-29

Write your own version of the lawyer's boundary question. Where are you mainly trying to determine the minimum you owe? What would a more generous question sound like?

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 4 / The practical mercy

Read Luke 10:30-37

Choose one action of the Samaritan and identify a realistic parallel in your own setting. Ask someone’s permission before acting on a need you have assumed.

Day 5 / The first crossing

Read Philippians 2:5-11

Read Paul’s account of Christ’s humility and exaltation. How might His example reshape your desire for status or credit in an act of service?

Before the next meeting

What did I notice? What was difficult? What question or next step do I want to bring with me?



Week Six

Seeing the Nearest Face

Book reading Chapters 11-13: The Nearest Face, Gardens in the Ruins, and The Ninety Percent. Read the Epilogue as a closing reflection.

Read together Luke 10:38-42 and Jeremiah 29:4-7

Attention becomes a way of life through ordinary presence and faithful care for the places and people entrusted to us.

Some of the people easiest to overlook are the people closest to us. Familiarity allows us to assume we already know what they think, what they need, and how they are doing. The book asks us to return to the nearest face with fresh attention. That might be a family member, a friend, a coworker, or someone whose daily work supports our own.

In Luke 10, Martha welcomes Jesus and becomes distracted by preparations while Mary listens to Him. Jesus addresses Martha's anxiety and affirms Mary's choice. The passage does not make useful work worthless. It challenges the way activity and worry can crowd out receiving the person who is present. We can serve someone while becoming too distracted to listen to them.

Jeremiah's letter addresses a very different setting: people carried into exile in Babylon. They are told to build houses, plant gardens, and seek the welfare of the city. These instructions belong first to those exiles. As we consider an application, they challenge our habit of postponing faithfulness until the place we live becomes the place we wish we lived. Care can begin within difficult conditions, even while we hope for change.

That care also has a public shape. Families, workplaces, churches, and neighborhoods teach people what they are worth through repeated actions. We can examine who is heard, whose needs are overlooked, and what happens when someone makes a mistake. We can advocate for a better practice within our influence instead of waiting for the entire culture to improve.

The final chapter invites us to discover shared concerns across real disagreement. We do not have to pretend the disagreement is small, and no percentage of agreement is guaranteed. The invitation is to meet an actual person rather than rehearse a category. As this study ends, choose a sustainable practice. Attention grows through returning: to God, to the person in front of us, and to the commitments that make our care dependable.

Read and Reflect

Begin together What have you noticed differently during these weeks? Share an observation rather than a success story.

1. In Luke 10:38-42, what is Martha doing, what is troubling her, and what does Jesus affirm about Mary?

2. How can good responsibilities become a way of missing someone? What would attentive service look like in your own setting?

3. Who receives Jeremiah’s letter? In verses 4-7, what are they instructed to do while living in a place they did not choose?

Consider Your Response

Look first at the passage, then consider your own response. You may pass on any personal question.

4. What might seeking the welfare of your community look like without approving everything that happens there?

5. Where could one repeated practice in your household, church, or workplace communicate greater dignity? Whose perspective should help shape the change?

6. What will you continue for the next thirty days, and who can check in with you? What would show that your attention is becoming more faithful?

Put It Into Practice

Practice together

Each person chooses one relationship and one place of influence. Write a realistic commitment for each: what you will do, when you will begin, and how you will invite feedback. Share with a partner if comfortable. Arrange one voluntary check-in within thirty days.

Practice this week

Continue one short daily practice of attention and one weekly act of connection for thirty days. Ask a trusted person whether you seem more present. Receive the answer without defending your intentions. Adjust what is not sustainable.

Closing prayer

God, thank You for meeting us through these weeks. Help us return to You when we become distracted or discouraged. Make us faithful in ordinary relationships, truthful in disagreement, and willing to cultivate good where we have been placed. Amen.

My next step and when I will begin

What I need to remember or ask for

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 1 / The nearest person

Read Luke 10:38-42

Whose current experience have you assumed you already know? Invite that person to tell you something you may have missed, and listen without correcting their description.

Day 2 / The posture of service

Read John 13:1-17

Observe how Jesus uses His authority as He washes the disciples' feet. What ordinary responsibility could you approach with greater humility this week?

Day 3 / The place you inhabit

Read Jeremiah 29:4-7

Name one need in your actual community. Listen to someone already affected by it or working on it before deciding what help you should offer.

Personal Reflection

Read slowly, notice one detail, answer honestly, and close in prayer. If you are exploring faith, write the question you would want to ask God.

Day 4 / The work of peace

Read Matthew 5:9-16

Consider peacemaking and the public witness of good works. What would it mean to lower contempt while remaining honest about a disagreement that matters?

Day 5 / The continuing response

Read Romans 12:9-18

Review the practical instructions in this passage, including the limits acknowledged in verse 18. Write your thirty-day commitment and the date of your voluntary check-in.

Before your thirty day check in

What did I notice? What was difficult? What question or next step do I want to bring with me?

Leader Guide

Weeks 1 through 3

Read the assigned passages and chapters before each meeting. Help the group read carefully, listen well, and respond honestly. Use these notes to guide discussion rather than as a script.

Week 1 / When We Stop Seeing

Keep the first conversation concrete and low pressure. Look for God's detailed knowledge in Psalm 139:1-6, His presence in verses 7-12, and the invitation to examination in verses 23-24. Do not make participants equate feeling watched with feeling loved; allow mixed reactions. The assigned reading omits verses 19-22, which contain the psalmist's strong language against enemies. If raised, read them openly and consider how the closing request for God's examination bears on our own loyalties and motives. The practice is attentive listening, not diagnosing or fixing someone.

Week 2 / The People We Write Off

Begin with Luke's stated setting rather than turning the parable into a generic lesson about family conflict. The father moves toward both sons; the older son's final response is left open. Invite self-examination without asking participants to identify which people in the room resemble a son. Keep chapter 4 connected to dignity and careful listening. Do not equate psychiatric illness with moral failure or demonic possession, and do not suggest that belonging replaces clinical care. If discussion becomes partisan, ask each speaker to describe their own conduct and return to the father's response.

Week 3 / Seen in the Wilderness

Let participants raise the hard question in Genesis 16:9. Do not offer an easy explanation or use the passage to direct someone back into abuse. The text gives a particular instruction within Hagar's story; it does not authorize group members to control another person's safety decisions. In Genesis 21, God opens Hagar's eyes to the well; the passage does not explain how long the well had been there or blame her for not seeing it. Avoid adding those claims. In the Genesis 2 reading, follow the actual narrated order rather than treating the book's garden metaphor as a chronological claim.

When a conversation needs care

Thank the person and ask what support they want. Do not press for details or invite competing advice. Recognize when pastoral, clinical, or other qualified support is needed. Follow your host organization's safeguarding procedures where applicable.

Leader Guide

Weeks 4 through 6

Week 4 / Jesus Sees the Whole Person

Keep the distinction between the passages clear. Mark narrates Bartimaeus' healing and response; Romans explains reconciliation through Christ. Do not imply that sufficient faith guarantees every reader physical healing. Do not turn blindness into a judgment about disabled people. In Romans, keep Christ's saving work central so the study does not reduce the gospel to attention or kindness. Participants may question the resurrection; welcome the question and use the assigned 1 Corinthians passage to identify the Christian claim rather than requiring public assent. No one must pray aloud or announce a decision.

Week 5 / A Place at the Table

In Luke 19, observe what Zacchaeus actually says and what Jesus declares; do not make speculation about every earlier transaction the center of the lesson. In Luke 10, the text does not state why the priest and Levite pass by. Treat possible motives as possibilities, not established facts. Mercy need not mean entering an unsafe situation alone or ignoring another person's wishes. Distinguish hospitality from automatic restoration of trust. When the group plans service, keep the people being served involved in the decisions and protect their privacy.

Week 6 / Seeing the Nearest Face

Keep Luke's emphasis on hearing Jesus rather than making Martha a caricature of busy or practical people. Jeremiah 29 addresses Judah's exiles in Babylon; its later promises are not guarantees of quick personal success or predictions about a modern nation. Frame today's application as faithful care where we live. The book's ninety percent describes the author's experience with a colleague, not a verified percentage for all disagreements. Seek honest common ground without minimizing serious differences. End with voluntary commitments and a check-in, not a demand for a dramatic testimony.

Continue the conversation

At a voluntary thirty-day check-in, ask what participants kept, what they changed, and what they learned from another person's feedback. If someone wants to explore faith further, offer a private conversation and a shared reading of a Gospel without requiring a public decision.

The Next Thirty Days

Choose a small commitment you can keep. Ask a trusted person for honest feedback about whether you are becoming more present. Revisit the plan without turning it into a measure of your worth.

The relationship I will give more attention to

The daily or weekly practice I will continue

One change I can help make where I live or work

My check in date and the person I will invite

What I notice when I return to this page

THE GOD WHO SEES

A SIX WEEK BIBLE STUDY

A place to read carefully.
A place to ask honestly.
A place to begin again.

This companion study follows the message of The God Who Sees from the habits that keep us from noticing one another to the biblical witness of a God who sees us fully.

Through six sessions, explore Scripture, consider your own responses, and practice care in the relationships and communities closest to you. Written for adult groups that include committed Christians, new believers, and people exploring faith.

Includes six teaching reflections, thirty-six discussion questions, thirty personal readings, weekly practices, prayers, space to write, and a leader guide.

MATTHEW C. GEE

matthewcgee.com