

Answering the Call

Student Guide — Week 1

Moving Beyond Head Knowledge

Welcome to Week 1. This week is about the difference between knowing about God and truly knowing God. You may have been a Christian for decades. You may know the Bible well. But there is always more of God to know—and the Holy Spirit is inviting you deeper. Come with an open heart.

Core Verse

Ephesians 1:17 (NIV): "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better."

Paul prays this for believers who already know about God. He is asking for something deeper: intimate, spirit-to-spirit knowing. That is the invitation this week.

1 • Knowing God vs. Knowing About God

Think about someone you know a lot about but do not truly know—maybe a celebrity, a politician, or even a coworker you see every day. You know facts. You know their public story. But you do not know what keeps them awake at night. You do not know what makes them laugh when no one is watching. You do not know what they whisper to the people they trust most.

That is the difference between knowing about someone and truly knowing them. And that is the difference between knowing about God and knowing God.

Reflection:

Take two minutes to write your answer: In what ways have you been content knowing about God without pressing in to know Him personally?

2 • What the Bible Says About Revelation

The following passages show us how God reveals Himself, why revelation matters, and what happens when we lack understanding. Read each passage slowly. Underline or highlight anything that stands out. Then answer the reflection question.

Proverbs 1:23

"If you turn to my reproof, I will make my words known to you."

The word 'make' means to pour out. God will pour out treasures of knowledge to those who turn toward Him.

Reflection: What does it mean that God pours out knowledge rather than simply offering it?

Proverbs 2:1-5

"My son, if you accept my words and store up my commands within you... if you look for it as for silver and search for it as for hidden treasure, then you will understand the fear of the Lord and find the knowledge of God."

Reflection: Are you seeking God like hidden treasure, or are you casually browsing? What would change if you pursued Him with urgency?

Colossians 2:2-3

"Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

Reflection: The treasures are hidden in a Person, not scattered in principles. How does that change the way you approach your faith?

John 16:13-15

"The Spirit of truth... will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own authority; he will speak only what he hears."

Reflection: The Spirit reveals, not invents. How does this protect you from both skepticism and gullibility?

Hosea 4:1-6

"My people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests."

Reflection: Lack of knowledge is active rejection, not passive ignorance. Where might you be rejecting knowledge God is offering you?

Ephesians 4:14

"Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching."

Reflection: What winds of teaching have you felt tossed by? What would anchor you?

1 Corinthians 2:9-12

"The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God... What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us."

Reflection: The Spirit illuminates what the mind cannot grasp alone. What deep thing of God are you asking the Spirit to reveal to you?

Jeremiah 33:3

"Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know."

Reflection: God invites you to call. What great and unsearchable thing do you need Him to reveal this week?

Matthew 16:15-17

"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven."

Reflection: Peter's revelation came directly from the Father. When have you experienced a moment like that—where you knew something in your spirit that you could not have reasoned your way to?

Luke 24:45

"Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures."

Reflection: The disciples needed their minds opened even after three years with Jesus. What mind-opening are you asking Jesus for?

3 • Head Knowledge vs. Heart Revelation

Head knowledge is like reading a travel guide about Paris. You can memorize the landmarks, the history, the best restaurants. But revelation is like stepping off the plane and smelling the bakery on the corner, hearing the language, feeling the cobblestones beneath your feet. The guidebook is accurate, but it is not the experience.

Key Distinctions:

- Head knowledge accumulates facts; revelation transforms affections. You can know God is loving and still feel unloved until the Spirit makes that truth alive in your heart.
- Head knowledge informs; revelation compels. Information may lead to agreement, but revelation leads to action, surrender, and worship.
- Head knowledge is static; revelation is dynamic. You can memorize a verse and never think of it again. But when the Spirit reveals that same verse in a moment of need, it becomes a living word.

Revelation Is Uncovering, Not Inventing

The Greek word for revelation is apokalupsis—meaning 'an unveiling.' Imagine a painting covered by a cloth. It already exists, fully complete. Revelation is not creating something new; it is the moment the cloth is pulled away and what was always there is finally seen.

This means true revelation never contradicts Scripture. The Holy Spirit does not speak new truths that oppose what God has already spoken. He illuminates, applies, and personalizes what is already written.

Reflection: Have you ever encountered a claim to 'new revelation' that conflicted with the Bible? How did you respond? How will you test future claims?

4 • Small Group Discussion Questions

Use these questions in your small group. You do not need to answer all of them. Let the conversation go where the Spirit leads.

1. The Donald Trump test. We all know things about certain public figures, but we don't truly know them. What is the difference between knowing about God and actually knowing God? Can you describe a moment when you felt you moved from one to the other?
2. Treasures hidden in a Person. Colossians 2:3 says all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ. What does it mean that these treasures are found in relationship rather than in a textbook? How has seeking God personally led you to discover something you could not have learned secondhand?
3. When knowledge becomes dangerous. Hosea 4:6 says God's people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. In what ways have you seen believers vulnerable to deception—not because they lacked access to truth, but because they never pressed into understanding? What practices help guard against this?
4. Opened minds. Luke 24:45 says Jesus opened the disciples' minds to understand the Scriptures. They had the same words all along, but suddenly they could see. Have you ever had a Scripture you read many times suddenly become alive? What do you believe made the difference?
5. Uncovering, not inventing. The lesson says true revelation never contradicts Scripture. Have you ever encountered someone who claimed a 'new revelation' that conflicted with the Bible? How did you discern whether it was from the Spirit of truth? What does it look like to hold a posture of being open to fresh insight while staying anchored to Scripture?

5 • This Week's Assignment

6. Name the Gap — Finish the sentence: 'I know You are _____, but I am still living as if _____.' Read Mark 9:24 and bring your gap to Jesus.

7. Exchange the Familiar for the Fresh — Change one thing in your routine. Read in the evening instead of morning. Pray on a walk. Discomfort often precedes renewal.
8. Listen Before You Speak — For three days, spend ten minutes in silence before saying a word. Let Him speak first. Read 1 Samuel 3:10.
9. Obey the Last Thing He Said — Identify one instruction you have been avoiding. Take one step. Read John 14:21.
10. Share What He Shows You — Tell one person one thing God has shown you. Read Psalm 66:16.

6 • Weekly Challenge: The 7-Day Deepening

- Morning: Read a passage aloud, twice. Pause on a word that stands out. Carry it with you.
 - Day 1: Psalm 42:1-5
 - Day 2: Psalm 63:1-8
 - Day 3: John 15:1-11
 - Day 4: Ephesians 3:14-21
 - Day 5: Romans 8:14-17
 - Day 6: Hebrews 12:1-3
 - Day 7: Revelation 3:20
- Midday: The Two-Minute Reset — Whisper the morning's word. Realign your thoughts.
- Evening: The Examen — Three questions: Where did I sense God's presence? Where did I miss Him? What do I want to carry into tomorrow?

A Final Word

You are not being asked to become someone else. You are being invited to be transformed into who God has created you to be—the version of you that knows God not just as doctrine, but as Father. Not just as Savior, but as Friend. Not just as King, but as the One who walks beside you in the cool of the day.

The gap between what you know and what you live is not a condemnation. It is a doorway. Walk through it.

"You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart." — Jeremiah 29:13