

## Introduction

Are you mad at God? Do you feel like He has turned His back on you or maybe that He doesn't exist at all? If you answered either of these questions with a yes or even a maybe, then these Bible studies are written for you. Through our abuse, we often lose our faith in God and often we will find ourselves questioning everything to do with Jesus. You can get back in touch with God; in fact, He wants you to. Jesus understands our pain and our suffering and can't wait for us to reach for Him.

I want to let you know that I am by no means an expert in the field of religion. But, I am a Christian and a survivor of Domestic Violence; who just like you lost my faith in Christ due to my abuse, and even was very mad at God for a few years. I found out some things during those years that I'd like to pass on in an attempt to help you regain your faith and to guide you back to God.

Please bear with me in my long winded explanations; I know when I was where you are now I hated when someone (usually those who have never been through it, and have degrees in religious studies) spouted off a passage from the Bible that was supposed to be the magick one that would help, and then didn't explain it to me.

This remark is in no way meant to reflect on our religious leaders in a negative manner. I personally just did not come across anyone that could help me. I'm sure that there are more pastors out there that CAN help, and I urge you to take this to your pastor if you have one, and make sure that it is correct for the church you are going to.

I'm going to attempt to tell you what they mean to me and then ask if you would read the verse(s) and think and pray over what they mean to you. I have purposely left out anything that came from any one else. Using my own creditability here, as a Domestic Violence Survivor that reconnected to my faith, is all I feel I need to include.

Please feel free to share your thoughts, feelings and questions with me  
[tailoredlifecoaching@gmail.com](mailto:tailoredlifecoaching@gmail.com) to allow both of us to gain a better understanding!

Either you can work through this study guide from beginning to end or you can choose a topic below and go straight to that topic.

[Why must we forgive?](#)

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## Why must we forgive?

One of the very first things I had to come to terms with was forgiving. I was a little ball of anger with absolutely no room in my mind or heart for forgiveness. No matter what I studied in the Bible, or how much I prayed I just got angrier because I couldn't understand why nothing was working the way the Bible said it was supposed to. I spent many hours trying to pray, ending up yelling and screaming at the top of my voice about the unfairness of it all.

I would go from being mad at my abuser to being mad at myself, and on to being mad at God. I look back now and see that it was really all very silly for me to be ranting and raving and screaming Bible verses at God, He knows what the Bible says! It was my inability to forgive that was preventing any logical understanding, not His inability to keep His Word. One day I came across Ephesians 4:31-32, which made some sense. I was ready for it by then I guess.

Ephesians 4:31-32 says "(31)Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.(32)And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

You must first forgive all hurts bestowed upon you before you can begin to heal. Holding onto the spirit of unforgiveness such as Paul speaks of in Eph 4: 31 will only breed more contempt and allow the hurtful one the power to continue to control your deepest emotions, which will in turn continue to fester inside with nothing but destructive outcome.

There is a time period in which it is ok and even healthy to be bitter or angry with someone who has hurt or abused you, this time period is a different length for each person. But once it goes beyond that to the point that you think you will never forgive the person, then the unhealthiness starts. No pain is so great that it lies

beyond the power of God to help you forgive that pain, hurt or wrong doing. This may sound flip in the face of your very real memories of abuse throughout your life, but it is part of God's Truth!

Consider what Jesus himself said in Matt. 18:34-35 at the end of His parable of the unforgiving servant. "(34) And his master was angry, and delivered him to the tortures until he should pay all that was due to him. (35) So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, doesn't forgive his brother his trespasses." If our forgiveness to others should be in proportion to what we as Christians have been forgiven by Christ, then we should always find it within ourselves to forgive others.

Try to forgive the one(s) that have hurt you, so that evil spirit of unforgiveness doesn't take up residence in your heart, leaving no room for Jesus to enter and cleanse your soul of the sorrow you feel. As DV survivors, we often forget to really try to forgive the abuse and abuser. I am not saying that we need to make excuses for them. But, it helps to really forgive and then and only then can you begin to forget, which will start you along the path of healing.

I started with forgiving God, like He needed that! But, I needed and He allowed it. I went from there to forgiving myself, for things, which in reality were not my fault but I had to do this step also. Then I could finally forgive the abuse, and that ultimately is what started my path to healing.

### **Exercise**

1. Read the passages above
2. Pray that God will help you to forgive
3. Believe with all you have to believe with that God CAN and WILL help you
4. Write the thoughts and feelings you are having during each reading and prayer

Try doing the above exercise daily; for at least a week, or until you feel that you have really forgiven everything that has been done to you. Some of us may take less than a week, and some of us may take more than a week. If you are really struggling with this and would like to discuss it one on one, please [email](#) me.

## **Why did God let me be abused?**

Rekindling our faith in Jesus is our next step on our journey, once we are finished with forgiving. At this point you may still be questioning the why of it all. You may still be a little mad at God and are asking repeatedly why He let this happen to you.

I believe that God uses bad things in our lives to get our attention and to strengthen us for His work. I'm not suggesting that He is a cruel God or anything of that nature. I am not saying that God felt you deserved it or needed to be abused.

If you are harboring feelings of guilt for what has happened to you or you are curious as to WHY things have happened in your life the way they have please visit this post [Feelings of Guilt](#) on my blog. While you are there look around a little, if you haven't visited the blog already, as there may be other articles that will be of some help to you also.

God doesn't make the abuse happen to us, nor does He coldly stand by watching as our worst fears and nightmares become a daily reality. Hebrews Chapter 11 outlines all of those throughout the Bible who have faced what seemed impossible odds to them, but continued in their faith. Some may waiver in faith, which is exactly Satan's plan! Just as you think your odds are -- or were -- against you, the Lord will be there to pick you up and dust you off.

It is through these trials of abuse that we are most tempted to blame God for letting this happen to us. We are tempted to allow our faith to slip to the wayside. But at

these most excruciating moments is when we need to let our faith soar the highest. It is through these moments that we become stronger, steadfast, and ready for the greater service to God.

The entire 11th chapter of Hebrews answers some of the toughest questions regarding faith. I encourage you to read it and think through the fact that those people didn't KNOW their story would end well. They retained their faith through thick and thin, if you will, and God stuck by them even in their darkest hour. If after reading the chapter you have any questions, please ask, because like I said earlier I didn't like it when I was just given a passage and no guidance as to what it meant, and it seemed like none of them made any sense to me. I'm not an expert by any means, but I will try to help if I can.

Faith is one of the easiest virtues to lose, and once lost, one of the hardest to regain. I think the first step in getting back in touch with your faith in God is what I've already said about having a forgiving spirit. Once you can achieve that goal you must then clear room within yourself and ask Jesus back into your heart.

I would love to say "And, then He will do the rest." But life doesn't have a fairy-tale ending right in the middle of it, and so that would not be entirely accurate. Jesus will HELP you do the rest is a more correct way of thinking about it. It even helps some to forgive God while we are doing the forgiveness exercises. God by no means needs our forgiveness, but if you are harboring any ill feeling towards Him for what has happened in your past then, by all means as a way to help heal your spirit, get down on your knees and forgive Him also. God will understand.

During my Bible studies that led to my healing and renewing my personal relationship with Jesus I found a study Bible that had an article in it that made Hebrews 11 seem so much more realistic. The name of the article is "Heroes in Faith"; the part that spoke to me is this:

*“Those who do not have faith cannot see past the physical world around them. They are limited by their temporal circumstances and are blind to what God is doing. But those that open their spiritual eyes can see the spiritual realities which transcend this world. Their hope is in God’s strength and in His faithfulness. In that hope they find the strength to endure. When it comes to faith, the world scoffs. Faith, at best, seems like a great waste; at worse, it seems almost suicidal.” -- From The Nelson Study Bible, copyright © 1997 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission.*

God uses the bad things that happen to us to mold us into better people. He knows how much we can bear, and just before we reach that breaking point, He steps in, and in some of the most unlikely of forms.

Psalms 34:19 states, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them."

God uses our experiences to help us grow spiritually. He gave us the ability to make our own decisions so that we can learn from them. He uses hurtful situations in the same way: regardless of whose decision landed us in a hurtful situation, we can grow from that moment on if we keep our eyes on God.

In fact, through trials and pain we learn how to help others. For this reason, Jesus became a human being. He experienced every temptation and every type of pain and humiliation so that He could understand the human condition in order to help us. You no doubt know the frustration of seeking the counsel of a person who has never been abused, perhaps causing you to wonder, “What do you know about it?” But, what a difference it makes to a hurting person to be told, “I have been where you are, and I have felt what you feel. Let me show you what I have found.”

God knows what it will take with each one of us to bring us into His power and to bring us to the place where we need to be in order to do His will. Now to some this suffering seems so cruel and so horrid that they turn forever from God. That is not

God's purpose for allowing our suffering. I know that all of this seems way out of line with the teaching that our God is kind and loving and merciful, but step back and think about it in the big picture sort of way. Would you be WHO you are today or WHO God wants you to be tomorrow without the suffering that you have endured?

We can think of the bad times in our lives as a time in which God is tearing us down to build us back up. Just as the military does with its soldiers, God breaks us down so that we may grow stronger in Him. By doing this we gain spiritual maturity by seeing a new perspective on God's mercy and provision, by learning more about ourselves, and by gaining more understanding of what others are going through.

### Exercise

1. Pray that God will guide your understanding
2. Read 2 Corinthians 4:7-15
  - a. What does versus 8 and 9 say to you?
  - b. How do they apply to you?

Think of what Paul was saying here. He knew this to be absolute truth because of what happened to him in Lystra. See Acts 14:19. Just as God saved Paul to go on teaching and preaching of God's deliverance, He will do the same for you.

- c. What are versus 10 and 11 saying to you?
  - d. What can you learn from Paul's example which he tells us of in verses 13-15?
3. Read Acts 9:1-19
  - a. In what way is God trying to get your attention?
  - b. How are you responding?
  - c. Are you responding with quickness in a humble manner?

The above exercise should take you more than one sitting to do. Begin each reading with a prayer asking for understanding. This entire exercise may take you a week or

more, work at your own pace. If you need help, have questions or would like feedback please [email](#) me.

## Feeling Hopeless?

Even after I had worked out all the forgiveness that I needed to do, and had restored my faith in Jesus; I still felt like it was all just hopeless. I began to have doubts again. As I struggled with this sense of helplessness and hopelessness, I began to realize that even those that are very strong in their faith have this feeling from time to time.

I believe that God does let us feel this at times when He wants us to get even closer to Him. I know that He still cares, because I see that He knows each emotion and need that I have. But, He also knows what it will take to get me right back where He wants me, doing His work and living in, through, and for Him. As long as we have Jesus, we have hope!

1 Peter was written to Christians who were feeling hurt and hopelessness. Although their feelings of hopelessness were due to persecution we can still learn from Peters writings. 1 Peter warns us of problems that come from outside of us.

There are basically five different themes in this first letter to the church in Asia Minor.

1. Suffering is a natural part of being a Christian and dedicating your life to Christ. (1 Peter 1:6-7; 3:14; 4:12-14)
2. Christians are to live righteous lives even in the face of evils. (1 Peter 1:13-16, 22; 2:1-5, 11-12; 3:15; 4:1-2, 7-11; 5:8-10)

3. No matter how much suffering a Christian goes through, they don't deserve it, and there will come a time when God will right every wrong and reward those who have endured. (1 Peter 2:20; 3:16-17; 4:15-19)
4. As Christians, we should submit ourselves to others for the sake of the gospel and for the sake of harmonious interpersonal relationships. Christ will judge our actions and difficulties in life will not be an excuse for rebellion and dissention. (1 Peter 2:13-19; 3:1-9; 5:1-7)
5. Christ's example to us should be our model in all the difficulties in our life. He led a sinless life, suffered quietly, and was committed to the truth, He endured the agony of the cross to save us from the bondage of our own sins, and we should live up to His example in the face of suffering. (1 Peter 1:2-5, 7-11, 17-21; 2:21-24; 3:18-22)

### Exercise

1. Pray for guidance.
2. Read through 1 Peter 2 or 3 times and concentrate on the one part that you are feeling most drawn to. What area do you need work in?
3. Ask yourself, what is God's involvement in my salvation?
4. Ask yourself, is God trying to bring me to a new level of understanding by the current trials and suffering I am facing?

The above exercise should take you more than one sitting to do. Begin each reading with a prayer. This entire exercise may take you a week or more, work at your own pace. If you need help, have questions or would like feedback, please [email](#) me.

I hope that this made some sense to you, and that you can take this, pray, read the scriptures and begin your journey to finding your peace with God. It was never gone, but rather somewhat misplaced. So now we need to get in there and find it, shake it off and put it back where it belongs. It is good to seek others to help you down the path of renewing your faith.

Life's trials will blow an individual off course, but together we are stronger. Applying Galatians 6:1, that we should help shoulder each others burdens will help all of us stand up to the strongest of life's gale force winds. So if you are not currently attending church somewhere, now would be a great time to start to look for one!

## **Are you finding strength in God?**

How do we find the strength to carry on normal daily lives, when it seems everything is coming apart around us? I for one had a hard time maintaining the things I was working through and on while reconnecting with Jesus! The daily grind would get to me, and boom, before I knew, I felt lost and hopeless again, or was starting to get mad and be unforgiving again.

The best way to feel secure in God when life hits us full force is to immerse ourselves in his word. There are several places throughout the Bible where we have been promised strength, in many different ways, and for many different situations. Therefore, to strengthen ourselves we must read about His promises to us; about His love, His power, His strength, His wisdom. We must read the old stories of those that kept their faith intact and how God helped them and what He did for them.

I also had a hard time taking those old stories, and applying them for practical use in my world of today. But, after searching and searching I found some passages that actually made sense, then and now. It is only through reading and gaining better knowledge of the Lord that we find the strength within ourselves. This inner strength is actually Jesus living through us and lending His strength to us. Let's examine what Jesus said:

John 15:5 **I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.**

Here Jesus is telling us that we should "abideth" in Him. But what does that mean really? In order to abide in Christ is a two-fold process. First we must keep no sin un-

confessed and un-judged, we must have no interests that we haven't brought Christ into, and no part of our lives can be closed to Christ. The second step is to take all of our burdens to Him, and allow Jesus to give us His wisdom, life and strength. This does not mean that we must have unceasing consciousness of Christ and not think of anything else, but that we must allow nothing into our lives that would separate us from Christ.

Once we have learned to abide in the Lord, what Paul told the church in Philippi is tangible.

Phi 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

The learning to abide in the Lord is the hard part. Each of us have that one thing that as new Christians, or Christians who are regaining faith, that we think we are "allowed" to hide from God. We cannot however, continue to fool ourselves into to thinking that He doesn't already know. Jesus is not going to fully move into our hearts and lend us His strength until we make room for Him. Making room is the second hardest part; we feel as if we must change our entire lives, and that we still aren't sure why we are changing everything.

To read the promises of strength given to us throughout the Bible we must first know where to look. Sure, we could get out the concordance and look up every instance of the word and where and how it was used...but, that would take us forever and most of us would not get through the list. So, in an effort to make this painless for us, I consulted this list of promises in the front of one of my Bibles. Here is a small list of the passages that offer us this promise.

Psalms 31:24; Psalm 41:1; Psalm 50:15; Psalm 138:7; Isaiah 35:4; Nahum 1:7; Mark 10:27; 2 Corinthians 12:9

While reading these verses read the verses around them, try to look at the big picture of it to see what was happening around the verse.

Now I told you earlier the best way for us to gain strength from God was to immerse ourselves in His word. Well, that's all good and fine, but we can't just pick up the Bible and start at the beginning like we would any other book. What to read in the Bible is just as important as how you read it. If we just sat down and started at the beginning we would find ourselves bogged down by the "history" of it, which to anyone other than a history buff, is very boring; and after a short time we find ourselves not reading at all. So let's take a different approach....

Read what you need! There are plenty of places online to get free daily readings or Bible Studies. Most daily readings or studies should only take you about 15 minutes. Pick a topic that interests you or something that you are having trouble with. Use this exercise for your readings if you want to keep a written journal to refer to as you go.

### **Exercise**

1. Pray for guidance, understanding and knowledge
2. Pick your reading and then read it
3. Answer these questions:
  - a. What is God telling me today?
  - b. How does this affect my life?

The key to reading the Bible is to do it everyday, don't spend too much time on your daily readings. Meaning, don't let yourself get bogged down to where it becomes a burden. Always pray for guidance before your reading, you'll be amazed at what God will show you! Try to do an in-depth study at least once per week, taking about an hour.

After your reading and journal entry, pray again, thanking God for His guidance, and any other things or people you wish to pray for. If you need help finding a reading or study plan, have questions or would like feedback, please [email](#) me.

## Take Back Your Life

Let today be the first day of your new life! Starting right now, make a promise to yourself to Take Back Your Life! Don't let abuse keep you from doing what God wants you to do, don't let it hold you in its clutches any longer!

This is only the beginning of what you can really do if you keep your eyes on the Lord and remain faithful in Him. Romans 8:28 tells us, "And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose." Let the verse great each day for you. Write it down, put it on your mirror, memorize it, and keep it in your heart.

Remember to start and end everyday with a prayer. Hey, I talk to God all day long! It's GREAT! Start and end each reading or study with a prayer. Your prayers do not need to be perfect or worded correctly or whatever, do not stress over it, say what you FEEL, God gets it...He really does!

If you did not find this through my blog and would like to know more about life coaching, or healing from Domestic Violence or any other type of abuse please visit my blog: [Tailored Life Coaching](#). My contact information is below my name at the bottom for those of you that are reading this in print and can't see the links throughout.

Want to be added to my daily prayer list? Email me or leave me a comment on my blog; I'd be happy to pray for your healing and recovery while you are on this bumpy road to getting your life back into some semblance of order! All abuse victims have the ability to heal and gain peace through God, it may be hard, but I know you will get there!

Please share this with others if you have found it useful, however please do not sell anything you have found in this study guide without contacting me for permission. Thank you! If you received this guide from someone who paid for it, please either

share the cost with them, or go to my blog and make a donation to help me continue to help DV Survivors.

For those of you that have either paid for this study guide or given donations towards its making and the work I do with DV Survivors I greatly appreciate it and want to say THANK YOU!

I sincerely hope that this has helped you in some way along your path to reconnecting with your faith in God. Know that you are not alone in how you feel, and that others are out there that have been just exactly where you are. If you feel the need to go further into any of the subjects I have covered here, or if you would like to email me please feel free to do so. I enjoy hearing from others about your experiences!

**Go Empower Yourself!**

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