

# MORE

A GUIDE TO GREATER DEVOTION

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STUDENT GUIDE

KEN GURLEY



# PREFACE

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Welcome to the new small group devotion, MORE.

This material is designed to take you deeper and higher into all God has for you. For the enemy in spiritual growth is the status quo. The moment we think we have arrived is the very moment we are sliding backwards. Always thirst and believe for more in God.

How is this material used? Each session has leaders notes, student handouts, discussion questions and a video teaching session (if utilized). The study can be utilized by an individual, a small group, or a Bible class.

This study is not for everyone. It is for the person who knows little about God and His Word; it is for the person who has walked with God and studied the Bible for many years. Each of us will find something MORE in the pages to follow.

A word about Bible translations. At First Church we either use the King James or New King James versions, with other translations sprinkled in when clarity is needed. For this study, I've borrowed heavily from other translations including the New International Version, English Standard Version, New Living Translation, and the Amplified Bible. Hopefully, the use of these other translations will provide clarity especially to those less familiar with biblical language.

If you have any questions, we're here to serve. Always reach for MORE!

May God bless you!



First Church of Pearland

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# EXPERIENCE MORE!

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## Chapter One: INTRODUCTION

Many people grow older, but they never grow up.

They mark time, but they never make history.

They earn money, but they leave no legacy.

They breathe air, but they inspire no one.

**SIMPLY STATED: “Some people do not grow!”**

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**HOW CAN WE GROW IN GOD?**

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**There is MORE. And you can EXPERIENCE MORE.**

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Mark 4:24

*Take heed what you hear.*

*With the same measure you use, it will be measured to you;*

*and to you who hear, MORE will be given.*

That's a promise. If you open up your heart to God, more will be given to you.

Experience MORE!

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. If you were to rate your growth in God on a scale from 1 to 10, how do you see yourself growing?
2. What is the top barrier in your own life to not growing in God as you much as He wants you to grow?
3. Discuss possible indicators of growing God. What signs of spiritual growth do you see in your own life?
4. Name one person in the Bible and one person you know personally who inspire you to growth. Why do these inspire you?
5. What areas of spiritual growth would you like to see further development in your life?

# WALKING WITH GOD

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## Chapter Two: WORSHIP

*We encourage you as believers to excel in love even MORE.*

(1 Thessalonians 4:10)

### WHY WERE WE PUT HERE?

The simple answer: we were created for worship. We breathe, live, walk, talk and work for one reason: to be in relationship with the One who made us and gave us life.

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### WE ARE TO WALK WITH GOD.

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### THE ONE WALKING BY YOUR SIDE.

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- Although there are some 1,000 names and descriptions given of God in the Bible, there are five definitive statements about Him that we should consider:

1. God is One (Deuteronomy 6:4).
2. God is Spirit (John 4:24).
3. God is Light (1 John 1:5).
4. God is Holy (1 Peter 1:16).

5. God is Love (1 John 4:16).

### **GOD'S IDENTITY: LOVE.**

C. S. Lewis of *The Chronicles of Narnia* fame once described “Four Loves” using four separate Greek words translated as love.

1. *Storge* is used for empathy or sympathy.
2. *Philia* is used for friendship or brotherly affection.
3. *Eros* is an erotic attraction or lust.
4. *Agape* is unconditional devotion.

### **TO WALK WITH GOD, WE SHOULD BE FILLED WITH HIS LOVE.**

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### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. We are put here for worship. Discuss what that means in your own walk with God and personal life.
2. Worship is “Worth-Ship.” How does walking worthy before God please Him and bless you?
3. How does understanding and dwelling upon the statement “God is Love” help you in your walk with God?
4. How does divine love differ from the world’s definition of love?
5. Discuss the different characters of the Parable of the Good Samaritan. What qualities are to be embraced and what are to be avoided in each character?



# UNCHAIN YOUR HEART

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## Chapter Three: FREEDOM

*There will be MORE joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine just persons who need no repentance.*

*(Luke 15:7)*

### LET'S TALK HEARTS!

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- The heart in the Bible and within each of us ponders, perceives, believes, knows, imagines, and decides. The heart of man is that part of us which reaches out for God (Romans 10:10, Hebrews 10:22).

### SIN CHAINS OUR HEARTS.

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### FREEDOM IS NEAR.

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### THE PROCESS OF FREEDOM.

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1 John 5:8

*There are three that bear witness on earth:*

*the Spirit, the water, and the blood;*

*and these three agree as one.*

Christ's Blood: Our REPENTANCE.

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Water: BAPTISM.

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Spirit: SPIRIT BAPTISM.

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#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. The human heart is obviously important to God. Describe your understanding of the heart and its impact on your daily walk with God.
2. Do you remember a time when your heart was chained by a sin? How did you overcome it?
3. For freedom's sake, we have been set free. What does that mean to you?
4. How important is repentance to preparing the heart for all God has for you?
5. The Spirit of God sets us free. Have you been baptized with the Spirit?



# ONE WITH HIM

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## Chapter FOUR: ONENESS

*Jesus said to Simon Peter,*

*“Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me MORE than these?”*

*(John 21:15)*

**NEVER FORGET, IT’S ALL ABOUT JESUS.**

- Greater & Better (Theme of Hebrews)

- More

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**WE HAVE FOUND HIM (John 1:45).**

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**LET’S GET TO KNOW JESUS.**

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Colossians 2:9-10

*In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;*

*and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.*

## LET'S BE ONE IN HIM.

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## CONCLUSION.

*John 21:17*

*Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. The opening illustration spoke of the unpopularity of the church and the popularity of Jesus. In what ways do we believers disappoint the world's expectations?
2. The "Jesus-Emphasis" has been seen in the early church and in today's Bible-based churches. How important is it to keep Jesus front-and-center in everything we do and how can we accomplish this?
3. Some believers are hesitant to boldly proclaim, "Jesus is God." Why do you think that is?
4. The Name of Jesus is necessary for salvation (Acts 4:12). What does this mean to you and how is it applied in your daily life and walk with God?
5. Since completion is found in Jesus, how do other things tempt us from finding our fulfillment in the Lord?

# GOD'S CROWN

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## Chapter Five: HOLINESS

*I can guarantee that unless you live a life that has God's approval  
and do it MORE faithfully than the scribes and Pharisees,  
you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.*

*(Matthew 5:20)*

### INTRODUCTION:

- Joe Theismann
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### HOLINESS IS GOD'S CROWNING ATTRIBUTE.

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### GOD'S HOLINESS SHOULD BE SEEN IN US.

1 Peter 15-16

*15 As He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct,  
16 because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy.*

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Holiness identifies us.

Holiness distinguishes the true from the false.

Holiness is integral to worship.

Holiness is a part of salvation.

Holiness prepares us for the future.

### **WE ARE TO PURSUE HOLINESS.**

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### **CONCLUSION.**

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Holiness is a vital subject. How has reading and hearing about this helped you?
2. Does it help you to think of God's holiness as His crown? In what way does it help you?
3. God is holy, and God is love. Do you think these are at odds with each other and why?
4. Several of the profound impacts of holiness are mentioned in this session. In which of these do you find the greatest impact in your own life and why?
5. "Let some things die." What areas of your life would you like to see fall away completely?

# THE HIGHER ORDER

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## Chapter Six: CHANGE

*And the Lord—who is the Spirit—makes us more and more like Him*

*as we are changed into His glorious image.*

*(2 Corinthians 3:18)*

### INTRODUCTION.

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### GOD SEPARATES US TO CHANGE US.

In Creation, God Divides (Genesis 1:1-31)

In Salvation, God separates (1 Thessalonians 5:5)

### Ten Blessings Of A Separated Life.

1. Unreaped Harvests (Job 4:8).
2. Freedom to Live as He Pleases (Psalm 119:45-46).
3. God's Present Favor (Hosea 10:12).
4. A Future Hope (Joshua 3:5, 1 Chronicles 15:12).
5. A Crucified Life (Romans 8:13-15).
6. Christlikeness (Galatians 4:19).
7. Enhanced Testimony (Philippians 2:15).
8. Growing Churches (Matthew 13:23).
9. Increased Fellowship (Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7).
10. Protection (Ephesians 6:14).



## **SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD: WHAT IT IS AND ISN'T.**

### What Separation is not:

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### What Separation is:

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## **CONCLUSION: THE CHANGE.**

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. God separates us from our old ways of living to change us. In what ways have you seen such changes in your life?
2. The “Stumbling Block” test says that something should not cause us to hinder someone else’s walk with God. Explain this idea in the context of brotherly love.
3. Highly effective people control their leisure time. In what ways could you improve on this?
4. “Separation is not judgmental superiority.” What does this statement mean to you?

5. Unreaped harvests form one of the benefits of living a changed life. In what way has living a changed, overcoming life led you to avoid many negative consequences?

# CROSS-BEARING

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## Chapter Seven: SACRIFICE

*It is MORE blessed to give than to receive*

*(Acts 20:35)*

### INTRODUCTION.

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### THE BIBLE IS FILLED WITH SACRIFICE.

- Abel sacrificed (Genesis 4:4).
- Noah sacrificed (Genesis 8:20).
- Abraham sacrificed (Genesis 9, 12, 13, 22).

### We Offer Spiritual Sacrifices

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### SACRIFICES THEN AND NOW ARE BASED ON LOVE.

- Twelve Apostles Martyrdom and Persecution
- Polycarp

*“86 years have I have served him, and he has done me no wrong.*

*How can I blaspheme my King and my Savior?”*

*(Polycarp)*

### SACRIFICE BRINGS GREAT POWER.

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**CLOSE.**

Luke 9:23

*If anyone would come after me,*

*let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me.*

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. The word “all” is used more in the Book of Acts than any other book of the Bible. What does this mean to you and how should it affect your growth in God?
2. Men and women in the Bible gave sacrificially. How do their examples motivate you?
3. Churches, ministries and missions are funded through the faithful and generous giving of supporters. How does this study motivate you to be more mindful in giving?
4. When you read what is thought to have happened to the apostles and how their lives ended, how does that make you view your own service for God?
5. People sacrifice a great deal to succeed in many spheres of life, in what ways does an overcoming child of God need to sacrifice and why?

# PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

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## Chapter Eight: THE WORD

*And the people of Berea were MORE open-minded than those in Thessalonica,  
and they listened eagerly to Paul's message.*

*They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth.*

*(Acts 17:11)*

### INTRODUCTION TO THE BIBLE.

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*"There's nothing more radical, nothing more revolutionary,  
nothing more subversive against injustice and oppression than the Bible.*

*If you want to keep people subjugated, the last thing you place in their hands is a Bible."*

—Desmond Tutu

### THE BOOK HAS POWER.

2 Peter 2:1

*Prophecy never came by the will of man,*

*but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.*

- Powerful in Creation (Hebrews 11:3)
- Powerful in Conquest:

## THE BOOK REVEALS.

- We See God in the Book.
  
- We See Ourselves in the Book.
  
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## THE BOOK PROMPTS A RESPONSE.

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## CLOSE.

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What reading plan for the Bible do you find best?
2. Of the metaphors used by the Bible for God's Word (hammer, fire, rock, foundation, etc.), which one do you think to be most applicable in your life and how?
3. How important is it to know the Bible not only to refute false beliefs, but to have the necessary information to withstand temptation and the enemy?
4. What is your favorite book of the Bible and why?
5. If God's Word is a mirror that reveals and changes, describe how important it is to be a student of the Word.

# THE SECRET PLACE

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## Chapter Nine: PRAYER

Luke 22:44

*Being in agony, He prayed MORE earnestly.*

### INTRODUCTION.

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### THE PLACE OF PRAYER.

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### THE ACT OF PRAYER.

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James 5:16

*The heartfelt and persistent prayer of a righteous man (believer)*

*can accomplish much [when put into action and made effective by God—it is dynamic and can have tremendous power].*

### THE SPIRIT OF PRAYER: DESPERATION.

*God does not answer prayer.*

*God answers desperate prayer.*

—Leonard Ravenhill

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### **IS GOD CALLING YOU TO THE SECRET PLACE?**

*Shut in with God in a secret place*

*There in the spirit, beholding His face*

*Gaining new power to run in this race*

*Oh, I love to be shut in with God*

*--Unknown*

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. Where and when do you pray the best?
2. When prayer comes difficult, how do you persevere in prayer?
3. Ravenhill observed that God does not answer prayer, He answers desperate prayer. How have you found Ravenhill's observation to be true in your own life?
4. Jesus did not speak of the possibility of giving, praying, and fasting, but of its probability. He said, "When" not "If." How devoted should we be to these spiritual disciplines and how concerned should we be if we do not see them in our lives?
5. Of the people you know, who inspires you to pray more than anyone else?



# EMBRACE THE UNBELIEVABLE

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## Chapter Ten: FAITH

Luke 17:5

*Then the apostles said to the Lord, "Give us MORE faith."*

### INTRODUCTION.

Hebrews 11:6

*Without faith it is impossible to please Him,  
for he who comes to God must believe that He is,  
and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.*

### DO YOU BELIEVE IN MIRACLES?

MIRACLE: Definition

A miracle is an unusual or wonderful event  
believed to be caused by the power of God

--Merriam Webster

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### MIRACLES COME AT DIFFERENT TIMES AND IN DIFFERENT WAYS.

Isaiah 55:8-9

8 *"My thoughts are not your thoughts,  
Nor are your ways My ways," says the Lord.*  
9 *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth,  
So are My ways higher than your ways,  
And My thoughts than your thoughts."*

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**THE MIRACLE OF HEALING.**

*There are 3,779 verses in the four gospels.*

*727 of them relate to healing & deliverances.*

*One-fifth of the Gospels then is devoted to Jesus healing people.*

*--Gary Wiens, THE HEALING MINISTRY OF JESUS*

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**OPEN YOUR EYES TO MIRACLES.**

*Anything God has ever done, He can do now.*

*Anything God has ever done anywhere, He can do here.*

*Anything God has ever done for anyone, He can do for you.*

*--AW TOZER*

**CLOSE.**

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What do you believe is the greatest miracle you have ever seen?
2. Why is it easier to believe for someone else's miracle than your own?
3. Scripture calls for the elders to anoint with oil and lay hands on the sick. But, Scripture also says that believers shall lay hands on the sick and they shall recover. Have you ever prayed for someone to be healed? What help would you need to have the confidence to pray for the sick and believe for their healing?
4. Why is it easier for children to have faith in God than for adults?
5. Tozer said that anything God has ever done, He can do for you. What one thing would you like to see change in your life? How can you develop the faith to see it happen?



# CELEBRATE UNITY

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## Chapter Eleven: UNITY

Hebrews 10:25

*“... Encouraging one another—*

*and all the MORE as you see the Day approaching”*

**INTRODUCTION: THE NORTH STAR.**

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**THE CHURCH IS BUILT ON UNITY.**

Acts 2:1

*When the Day of Pentecost had fully come,*

*they were all with one accord in one place.*

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**AROUND WHOM OR WHAT DO WE UNIFY?**

First Church identifies its unifying hubs in a document we call the “Who, What and Why:”

Who We Are

First Church is the continuation of the first church found in the Book of Acts.

What We Believe

First Church is a Bible-based church. That means we seek to believe and practice what is explicitly taught in the Bible. Based on such, we believe the following:

- About the Bible
- About God
- About Sin and Salvation

- About the Gospel and Conversion
- About Christian Living
- About Spiritual Gifts
- About the Church
- About Spiritual Encounters
- About Spiritual Disciplines
- About Healing of the Sick
- About Marriage
- About the Future

#### Why We Exist

- **Others** (Matthew 4:19, 5:16, 9:38, 24:14, 28:19-20).

#### **THREATS OF DISUNITY ARE ALWAYS PRESENT.**

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#### **ALLOW UNITY'S LIGHT TO GUIDE US.**

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#### **CLOSE: THE TWELFTH MAN.**

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. What is your favorite scripture verse on the subject of unity?
2. What do you think prompted the unity in the Upper Room amongst those original believers and gave birth to the great move of God and the birth of the church?

3. Which of the metaphors mentioned for the church (i.e., body, building, family) do you relate to the most and why?
4. In the “Who, What and Why” document, we enumerate some fundamental beliefs of this assembly. How do stating such beliefs help develop unity?
5. “One another” is mentioned 59 times in the New Testament. Why do you think God’s Word so emphasizes the importance of corporate rather than simply individual faith?

# HANDS IN THE HARVEST

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## Chapter Twelve: SERVICE

Acts 5:14

*Yet MORE and MORE people believed*

*and were brought to the Lord—crowds of both men and women*

### INTRODUCTION.

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### THE NEED FOR EVANGELISM.

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*“What will be remembered about the twenty-first century . . . is the great, and final, shift of human populations out of rural, agricultural life and into cities. We will end this century as a wholly urban species.”*

*--Doug Saunders, Arrival City, 2010*

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### SEVEN BIBLICAL REASONS TO EVANGELIZE AND DISCIPLE:

1. God loves the world (John 3:16).
2. God wants to see the world saved. (John 3:17).
3. Jesus commanded and commissioned us to reach the world (Matthew 28:19).

4. Winning souls is wise. (Proverbs 11:30).
5. Souls are eternal (Daniel 11:23)
6. Reaching and teaching people pleases Heaven (Luke 15:10)
7. Soul winners and disciple-makers are rewarded (1 Thessalonians 2:19-20).

**GOD STILL CALLS PEOPLE TO EVANGELIZE.**

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**WAYS TO REACH OTHERS.**

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**CLOSE.**

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. If the two most important days in your life are the day you are born and the day you find out why, then how important is it to seek God for answers to the major questions in our lives?
2. What are some ways to be a light and make a difference to the people around you?



3. How does increased urbanization of people in our day motivate you to be involved in evangelizing and discipling? In what ways is it different to reach people in urban areas than in rural areas?
4. Jesus sent His disciples out two-by-two. How does having someone with you to reach and teach people help give you strength for ministering to others?
5. Can you envision yourself being used of God to lead a small group? What kind?

# THE WEDDING APPROACHES

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## Chapter Thirteen: ANTICIPATION

Luke 10:35

*Take care of him; and whatever MORE you spend,  
when I come again, I will repay you.*

### INTRODUCTION.

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### THE KING'S RETURN IS PROMISED.

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*An overwhelming 25 percent of the Bible is given to predictive prophecy.*

*In the Old Testament, there are over 1,800 references to the second coming of Christ.*

*And of the 260 chapters in the New Testament, there are more than 300 references to Jesus's return. That is one out of every 30 verses. And 23 of the 27 books of the New Testament feature the return of Jesus as a prominent theme.*

*For every prophecy in the Bible about the first coming of Jesus, there are eight about the second coming of Jesus. It is the primary theme of Scripture.*

*--Dr. Robert Jeffress, "What Difference Does Prophecy Make," 2017*

**HIS RETURN WILL BE SOON.**

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Acts 1:11

*Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven?*

*This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven,  
will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.*

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**WE ANTICIPATE HIS RETURN.**

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**CLOSE.**

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. “Maranatha” means, “Our Lord come.” It was the greeting amongst believers in the first church. Do you feel it is just as important today as it was then to recognize the soon coming of the Lord?
2. Hope is a powerful force. How do you see hope at work in your life?

3. How does the knowledge that Jesus will soon return affect your priorities, your future, and your decisions?
4. One of the most difficult aspects of the subject of future events is timing. People want to know exactly when such-and-such will take place. How is it possible to live with an expectancy of the Lord's Return without getting lost in debates about the exact timing of such an event?
5. We have come to the close of this session and of the MORE series. In what way has this series helped you to become the person God desires for you to be?

# SUMMARY

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And there you have it... MORE!

I hope you've been blessed by this study and I hope too that it has inspired you to grow more and discover more in God. The heights and depths of God are truly beyond our comprehension and level of experience.

If you have benefited from this, please consider starting a small group to share it. God will use these words to come to life in someone else's heart. And through prayerful discussion and fellowship, the words and lessons will have an even greater impact upon you. You will grow more as you give more of yourself to others.

We never reach a plateau. We should always avoid the status quo. Go deeper and go higher! Let God use you more and more.

May God be with you now and always!