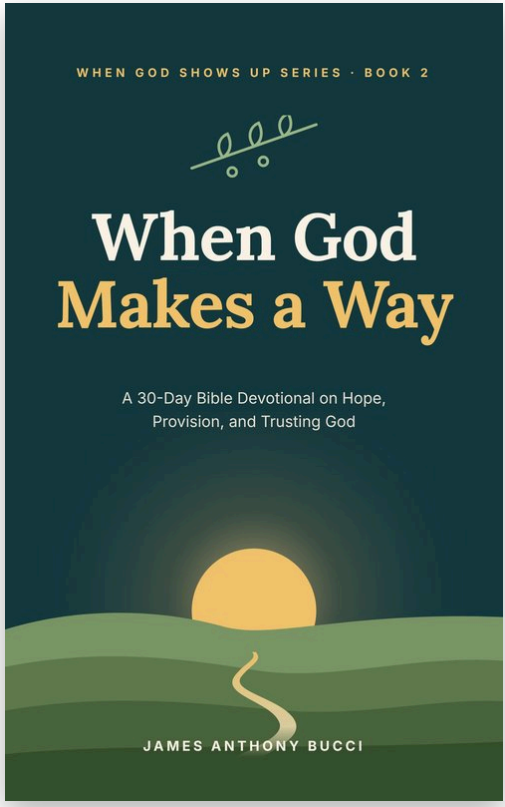
SMALL-GROUP LEADER GUIDE

When God Makes a Way

Book 2 of the When God Shows Up series



Six weekly sessions for churches, home groups, and friends reading the 30-day devotional together

James Anthony Bucci · jamesanthonybucci.com

How to use this guide

The book has 30 days. This guide splits them into **six weekly sessions of five days** each. Group members read one day at a time on their own, then meet once a week to talk about what they read.

Each session takes about 45 to 60 minutes and follows the same simple pattern:

- **Open** (5 minutes): one easy question to get everyone talking.
- **Review the week** (5 minutes): name the five stories. Ask someone to retell one in their own words.
- **Read together** (5 minutes): read the key verse aloud, then the full passage if you have time.
- **Talk about it** (25 to 35 minutes): pick the questions that fit your group. You won't get to all of them, and that's fine.
- **Live it and pray** (10 minutes): a simple challenge for the week, then close in prayer.

TIPS FOR LEADERS

- You don't need to be a Bible teacher. Your job is to ask good questions and let people talk.
- Let silence happen. People often need a few seconds to think.
- Never pressure anyone to share. Some of these questions are personal.
- If someone hasn't done the reading, they're still welcome. The stories are short enough to read together.
- Every story points to a King James passage. Encourage people to read the passage itself, not just the retelling.

The questions in this guide come from the journal prompts in the book, so group members will have already thought about them during the week.

Week 1

OPEN

Which story this week surprised you the most, and why?

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 1: Stand Still and See (Exodus 14:1–31)

Day 2: What Are They Among So Many? (John 6:1–14)

Day 3: A Basket Among the Reeds (Exodus 1:22–2:10)

Day 4: Through the Roof (Mark 2:1–12)

Day 5: A Tree in Bitter Water (Exodus 15:22–27)

READ TOGETHER

> *"And Moses said unto the people, Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will shew to you today: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen today, ye shall see them again no more for ever."*
> Exodus 14:13 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 1: Stand Still and See

1. What "sea" is in front of you right now, the thing that seems to block every way forward?
2. What would it look like for you to "stand still" inside, and still "go forward" this week?

Day 2: What Are They Among So Many?

1. Where in your life are you "doing the math" like Philip and coming up short?
2. What is your "five loaves and two fish," the small thing you could offer God today?

Day 3: A Basket Among the Reeds

1. Who or what are you holding on to tightly because you're afraid of what might happen?
2. What is the "basket" you can build, the small, faithful part that's yours to do?

Day 4: Through the Roof

1. Who has "carried" you to Jesus at some point in your life?
2. Who do you know who can't get to Jesus on their own right now?

Day 5: A Tree in Bitter Water

1. Is there something in your life that has turned bitter? Name it honestly.
2. When you hit bitter water, is your first response to complain or to cry out to God?

LIVE IT

Pick one story from this week and tell it to someone in your own words before you meet again.

PRAY

Close by praying together, or let the leader pray this prayer from Day 5:

Lord, You are the God who heals. When life turns bitter, help me cry out to You instead of complaining. Show me what You want to use to make it sweet. And remind me that Elim is ahead, even when I'm standing at Marah. Amen.

Week 2

OPEN

Which person in this week's stories did you relate to most?

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 6: God Will Provide Himself a Lamb (Genesis 22:1–14)

Day 7: Nevertheless at Thy Word (Luke 5:1–11)

Day 8: Two Years Forgotten (Genesis 40:1–41:44; 50:20)

Day 9: A Scarlet Cord (Joshua 2:1–21; 6:22–25)

Day 10: Just the Hem (Mark 5:25–34)

READ TOGETHER

> "*And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together.*"
> Genesis 22:8 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 6: God Will Provide Himself a Lamb

1. What is the "Isaac" in your life, the thing you find hardest to trust God with?
2. Where are you still climbing, waiting to see God's provision?

Day 7: Nevertheless at Thy Word

1. Where have you "toiled all night and taken nothing"?
2. Is there something God is asking you to try again? What is your "nevertheless"?

Day 8: Two Years Forgotten

1. Where do you feel forgotten or overlooked right now?
2. How can you stay faithful in the "prison" season you're in?

Day 9: A Scarlet Cord

1. Is there something in your past that makes you feel disqualified from God's love?
2. What is your "scarlet cord," a visible way you can show you're trusting God's promise?

Day 10: Just the Hem

1. What have you been carrying for a long time that you need to bring to Jesus?
2. Do you ever try to get "just enough" from God without letting Him see you? Why?

LIVE IT

Choose one journal question you skipped this week and write out your answer.

PRAY

Close by praying together, or let the leader pray this prayer from Day 10:

Jesus, I reach out to You today. You know the things I've carried for years, the things no one else could fix. Heal what needs healing in me, and help me come to You openly, not hiding. Thank You for calling me Your child. Amen.

WHEN GOD MAKES A WAY · DAYS 11 TO 15

Week 3

OPEN

Was there a verse this week that stuck with you? Read it aloud to the group.

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 11: Feet in the Water (Joshua 3:1–17)

Day 12: Under His Wings (Ruth 1:1–2:23)

Day 13: Money in a Fish's Mouth (Matthew 17:24–27)

Day 14: Praying Without Words (1 Samuel 1:1–28)

Day 15: By Many or by Few (1 Samuel 14:1–23)

READ TOGETHER

> "*And Joshua said unto the people, Sanctify yourselves: for tomorrow the LORD will do wonders among you.*"
> Joshua 3:5 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 11: Feet in the Water

1. What "river" is between you and what God has promised?
2. Is God asking you to step in before you see the way open? What would that step be?

Day 12: Under His Wings

1. Have you ever "happened" to be in the right place at the right time? Looking back, how was God in it?
2. What is your "gleaning," the faithful, ordinary work in front of you right now?

Day 13: Money in a Fish's Mouth

1. What practical need or bill is weighing on you right now?
2. How does it feel to know Jesus already knows about it?

Day 14: Praying Without Words

1. Is there a long-held longing you've carried for years? Write it down honestly.
2. What would it look like to "pour out your soul" to God about it, without needing the right words?

Day 15: By Many or by Few

1. Where are you "sitting under the pomegranate tree," waiting instead of acting?
2. What "cliff" might God be asking you to climb, even without a guarantee?

LIVE IT

Write this week's key verse on a card and keep it where you'll see it every day.

PRAY

Close by praying together, or let the leader pray this prayer from Day 15:

Lord, nothing limits You, not small numbers, small resources, or small people. Give me Jonathan's courage to move when You lead, even when others are sitting still. Help me trust what You can do, even when I'm not sure what You will do. Amen.

Week 4

OPEN

Where have you seen God at work in your own life since we last met?

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 16: Out of the Boat (Matthew 14:22–33)

Day 17: When Everything Burned (1 Samuel 30:1–20)

Day 18: A Seat at the King's Table (2 Samuel 4:4; 9:1–13)

Day 19: When the Wine Ran Out (John 2:1–11)

Day 20: Seven Times in a Muddy River (2 Kings 5:1–15)

READ TOGETHER

> *"And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"*
> Matthew 14:31 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 16: Out of the Boat

1. Is Jesus calling you to "get out of the boat" in some area of your life?
2. What "wind" tends to pull your eyes off Jesus?

Day 17: When Everything Burned

1. When you're at your lowest, where do you usually turn first?
2. What memories of God's faithfulness can you "encourage yourself" with today?

Day 18: A Seat at the King's Table

1. Is there a "Lo-debar" in your life, a place where you've been hiding or settling?
2. Do you ever see yourself the way Mephibosheth did? What does God say about you instead?

Day 19: When the Wine Ran Out

1. What has “run out” in your life right now?
2. What is one thing Jesus has asked of you that you need to simply “do”?

Day 20: Seven Times in a Muddy River

1. Is there a simple step of obedience you’ve resisted because it seemed too small or humbling?
2. Have you ever quit “at six”? What would it look like to keep going?

LIVE IT

Pray for one person in the group by name every day this week.

PRAY

Close by praying together, or let the leader pray this prayer from Day 20:

Lord, forgive me for wanting You to work my way instead of Yours. Humble me to obey even when Your answer seems simple. Help me keep going until the seventh time. And make me brave like that servant girl, to point others to You. Amen.

WHEN GOD MAKES A WAY · DAYS 21 TO 25

Week 5

OPEN

Which of this week's stories would you most want to tell a friend who doesn't read the Bible?

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 21: Bread Every Morning (Exodus 16:1–31)

Day 22: Up a Sycamore Tree (Luke 19:1–10)

Day 23: The Night the King Couldn't Sleep (Esther 3:1–6; 5:9–6:14)

Day 24: Shut Mouths (Daniel 6:1–28)

Day 25: Four Days Too Late (John 11:1–44)

READ TOGETHER

> *"Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no."*
> Exodus 16:4 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 21: Bread Every Morning

1. Where are you anxious about "tomorrow's manna" instead of trusting God for today?
2. What has God provided for you today that you may have taken for granted?

Day 22: Up a Sycamore Tree

1. Is there a "tree" you've climbed to get closer to Jesus? What did it cost you?
2. Do you ever feel too far gone for Jesus to want to come to your house?

Day 23: The Night the King Couldn't Sleep

1. Is God feeling "silent" in your life right now? How might He still be working behind the scenes?
2. Have you done something good that no one noticed? How does it feel to know God remembers?

Day 24: Shut Mouths

1. What daily habits of faith are you building now that will hold you in a crisis?
2. Is there pressure in your life to "close the window" on your faith?

Day 25: Four Days Too Late

1. Is there a prayer you feel God answered "too late"? Tell Him honestly how you feel.
2. How does it change things to know Jesus weeps with you?

LIVE IT

Read one of this week's passages in full from your own Bible, slowly, out loud.

PRAY

Close by praying together, or let the leader pray this prayer from Day 25:

Jesus, sometimes it feels like You came too late. Thank You for weeping with me in my grief. Help me trust Your timing, and roll away whatever stone I've put between my pain and Your power. Speak life where I only see death. Amen.

Week 6

OPEN

Looking back over all 30 days, what is one thing God has been showing you?

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 26: A Road Through the Desert (Acts 8:26–39)

Day 27: Laughter in the Tent (Genesis 18:1–15; 21:1–7)

Day 28: The Boy Who Overheard (Acts 23:11–35)

Day 29: Every Soul Safe to Land (Acts 27:1–28:2)

Day 30: Can These Bones Live? (Ezekiel 37:1–14)

READ TOGETHER

> *"And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert."*
> Acts 8:26 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 26: A Road Through the Desert

1. Has God ever moved you from a "busy" season to a quiet one? What might He be doing there?
2. Who in your life is asking questions about God?

Day 27: Laughter in the Tent

1. Is there a promise or a hope you've quietly given up on?
2. What would change if you truly believed nothing is too hard for the Lord?

Day 28: The Boy Who Overheard

1. Is there something God has promised you that feels threatened right now?
2. Have you ever been the "nephew," in the right place to speak up? Did you?

Day 29: Every Soul Safe to Land

1. Is there a storm in your life where "all hope" feels gone?
2. What has God said, in His Word or to your heart, that you can hold on to like Paul did?

Day 30: Can These Bones Live?

1. What "dry bones" in your life feel past hope?
2. What would it look like to answer God, "Thou knowest," about it?

LIVE IT

Write a short note to God thanking Him for one thing He did during these 30 days.

PRAY

Close by praying together, or let the leader pray this prayer from Day 30:

Lord God, You know. Where my life feels dry and hopeless, breathe on it. Put Your Spirit in me, and let me live. Thank You for making a way, again and again, where I could see no way. I trust You with every valley still ahead. Amen.

After the six weeks

Thank you for leading your group through *When God Makes a Way*. If your group would like to keep going, the When God Shows Up series has more 30-day books, each with its own free leader guide.

- All the books and free leader guides: **jamesanthonybucci.com/leaders**
- Read Bible stories free by topic: **jamesanthonybucci.com/topics**
- A free 7-day devotional for anyone in your group: **jamesanthonybucci.com/free**

You're welcome to print and copy this guide for your group. Scripture quotations are from the King James Version (KJV).