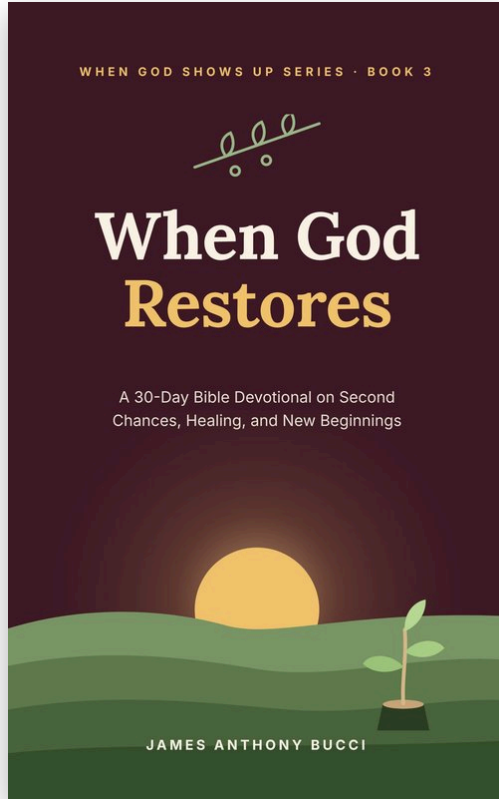


SMALL-GROUP LEADER GUIDE

When God Restores

Book 3 of the When God Shows Up series



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

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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: Breakfast by the Fire (John 18:15–27; 21:1–19)

Day 2: The Brother He Feared (Genesis 27:41–45; 32:3–33:11)

Day 3: While He Was Yet a Great Way Off (Luke 15:11–32)

Day 4: Twice as Much (Job 1:1–22; 42:1–17)

Day 5: Everything I Ever Did (John 4:1–42)

READ TOGETHER

“He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.”

John 21:17 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 1: Breakfast by the Fire

1. Is there a failure you keep replaying? What would it mean to bring it to Jesus “by the fire”?
2. How does it feel to know Jesus restores your calling, not just your record?

Day 2: The Brother He Feared

1. Is there a relationship you’ve been avoiding because of fear or guilt?
2. What part of the brokenness was your responsibility?

Day 3: While He Was Yet a Great Way Off

1. Is there a “far country” in your life you need to come home from?
2. Do you ever try to earn your way back to God? What does this story say about that?

Day 4: Twice as Much

1. What loss or hardship are you still asking “why” about?
2. Is there someone who hurt you during a hard season whom you need to pray for?

Day 5: Everything I Ever Did

1. What have you been trying to satisfy your “thirst” with?
2. How does it feel to be fully known by Jesus and still welcomed?

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:

Jesus, You know everything I've ever done, and You still want to give me living water. I'm thirsty for the life only You can give. Take my shame and turn it into a story that points others to You. Amen.

Week 2

OPEN

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

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 6: I Am Joseph (Genesis 42:1–45:15)

Day 7: Neither Do I Condemn Thee (John 8:1–11)

Day 8: His Hair Began to Grow (Judges 16:4–30)

Day 9: He Cried the More (Mark 10:46–52)

Day 10: Thou Art the Man (2 Samuel 11:1–12:13; Psalm 51)

READ TOGETHER

"Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life."

Genesis 45:5 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 6: I Am Joseph

1. Is there someone in your family you need to forgive?
2. Can you see any way God has worked through a past hurt in your life?

Day 7: Neither Do I Condemn Thee

1. What "accusing voices" do you hear about your past?
2. How does it change things to hear Jesus say, "Neither do I condemn thee"?

Day 8: His Hair Began to Grow

1. Is there a gift or calling you've been careless with?
2. Where do you need to believe that God's grace is "growing back" in your life?

Day 9: He Cried the More

1. What do you want Jesus to do for you? Write it down as plainly as Bartimaeus said it.
2. Has anyone (or anything) discouraged you from crying out to God?

Day 10: Thou Art the Man

1. Is there something you've been trying to cover up instead of confessing?
2. Who is a "Nathan" in your life, someone who will tell you the truth?

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:

Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Show me the sin I can't see in myself. Give me the humility to confess instead of defend. Thank You that You put away my sin when I bring it to You. Amen.

Week 3

OPEN

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

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 11: Remember Me (Luke 23:32–43)

Day 12: Bought Back (Hosea 1:2–3; 3:1–5; 14:1–7)

Day 13: The One Who Came Back (Luke 17:11–19)

Day 14: The Worst King's Prayer (2 Chronicles 33:1–20)

Day 15: Talitha Cumi (Mark 5:21–24, 35–43)

READ TOGETHER

“And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise.”

Luke 23:42–43 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 11: Remember Me

1. Do you ever feel it's “too late” for you or someone you love? Why?
2. What strikes you most about Jesus' answer to the thief?

Day 12: Bought Back

1. What “other loves” tend to pull your heart away from God?
2. How does it feel to know God pursued you and paid to bring you back?

Day 13: The One Who Came Back

1. What has God done for you recently that you haven't thanked Him for?
2. Do you tend to rush on after a prayer is answered? Why?

Day 14: The Worst King's Prayer

1. Have you ever felt too far gone for God? What would Manasseh say to you?
2. Is there something in your life that needs to be torn down, and something that needs to be rebuilt?

Day 15: Talitha Cumi

1. What are you waiting on that feels like it's taking too long?
2. Is there someone you love whom you need to bring to Jesus today?

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 Jesus, when the news is bad and the waiting is long, help me hear You say, "Be not afraid, only believe." I bring You the people and the hopes I love most. Take them by the hand and speak life over them. Amen.

Week 4

OPEN

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

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 16: Fifteen More Years (2 Kings 20:1–11)

Day 17: One Last Healing (Luke 22:39–53; John 18:1–11)

Day 18: Thy Son Liveth (1 Kings 17:8–24)

Day 19: Brother Saul (Acts 9:1–19)

Day 20: When His Reason Returned (Daniel 4:1–37)

READ TOGETHER

“Turn again, and tell Hezekiah the captain of my people, Thus saith the LORD, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold, I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the house of the LORD.”

2 Kings 20:5 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 16: Fifteen More Years

1. What have you been bringing to God with tears?
2. How does it comfort you to know God sees your tears?

Day 17: One Last Healing

1. When are you most tempted to “swing the sword” at someone?
2. Is there someone you’ve wounded who needs you to help restore what was broken?

Day 18: Thy Son Liveth

1. Have you ever wondered whether a hardship was God punishing you? What happened?
2. Who in your life is grieving and needs you to “carry” them to God in prayer?

Day 19: Brother Saul

1. Is there someone you find it hard to believe God could change?
2. When has God asked you to do something that scared you?

Day 20: When His Reason Returned

1. In what area of your life are you tempted to say “I built this”?
2. What does it look like for you to “lift up your eyes to heaven” in a hard moment?

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:

Most High God, forgive me for the times I've taken credit for what You've given me. Lift my eyes to You. Restore my mind when it's anxious or confused. You rule over everything, and I praise You. Amen.

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: Weep Not (Luke 7:11–17)

Day 22: Shouting and Weeping (Ezra 1:1–4; 3:1–13)

Day 23: Wilt Thou Be Made Whole? (John 5:1–15)

Day 24: Profitable for the Ministry (Acts 12:25; 13:13; 15:36–41; Colossians 4:10; 2 Timothy 4:11)

Day 25: She Loved Much (Luke 7:36–50)

READ TOGETHER

“And when the Lord saw her, he had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.”

Luke 7:13 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 21: Weep Not

1. Is there a grief you've been carrying that you haven't been able to pray about?
2. How does it help to know Jesus moved toward the widow before she asked?

Day 22: Shouting and Weeping

1. Is there something in your life God is rebuilding? How does it compare to what was lost?
2. Can you hold both joy and grief about it? Write about each.

Day 23: Wilt Thou Be Made Whole?

1. Is there a long-standing struggle you've gotten used to?
2. What explanations or excuses do you give when you think about change?

Day 24: Profitable for the Ministry

1. Is there a past failure that still makes you feel useless to God?
2. Is there someone you've written off who might deserve a second chance?

Day 25: She Loved Much

1. Do you see yourself more like the woman or more like Simon? Why?
2. What has God forgiven you for that still moves 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:

Lord Jesus, I've been forgiven so much. Thank You for Your mercy. Let my gratitude pour out like that woman's perfume. Keep me from looking down on others, and help me love You much. Amen.

Week 6

OPEN

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

REVIEW THE WEEK

Day 26: More Than a Servant (Philemon 1–25)

Day 27: Such as I Have (Acts 3:1–10)

Day 28: Tabitha, Arise (Acts 9:36–42)

Day 29: My Lord and My God (John 20:19–31)

Day 30: All Things New (Revelation 21:1–7)

READ TOGETHER

“For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldest receive him for ever; Not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord?”

Philemon 15–16 (KJV)

TALK ABOUT IT

Day 26: More Than a Servant

1. Is there someone you’ve wronged that you need to go back to?
2. Is there someone you need to welcome back the way Philemon was asked to?

Day 27: Such as I Have

1. When have you felt you had nothing to offer someone in need?
2. What “such as I have” could you give someone this week?

Day 28: Tabitha, Arise

1. Who is a “Dorcas” in your life, someone who serves quietly and faithfully?
2. What small act of kindness could you do this week?

Day 29: My Lord and My God

1. What doubts or questions do you have about God right now?
2. How does it help to know Jesus came back specifically for Thomas?

Day 30: All Things New

1. What in your life are you longing for God to make new?
2. How does the promise of Revelation 21 change how you face today?

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, thank You that You make all things new. Thank You for every way You've restored me, and for the promise of the day when every tear will be wiped away. Until then, help me live with hope. I trust You with everything still broken. Amen.

After the six weeks

Thank you for leading your group through *When God Restores*. 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).