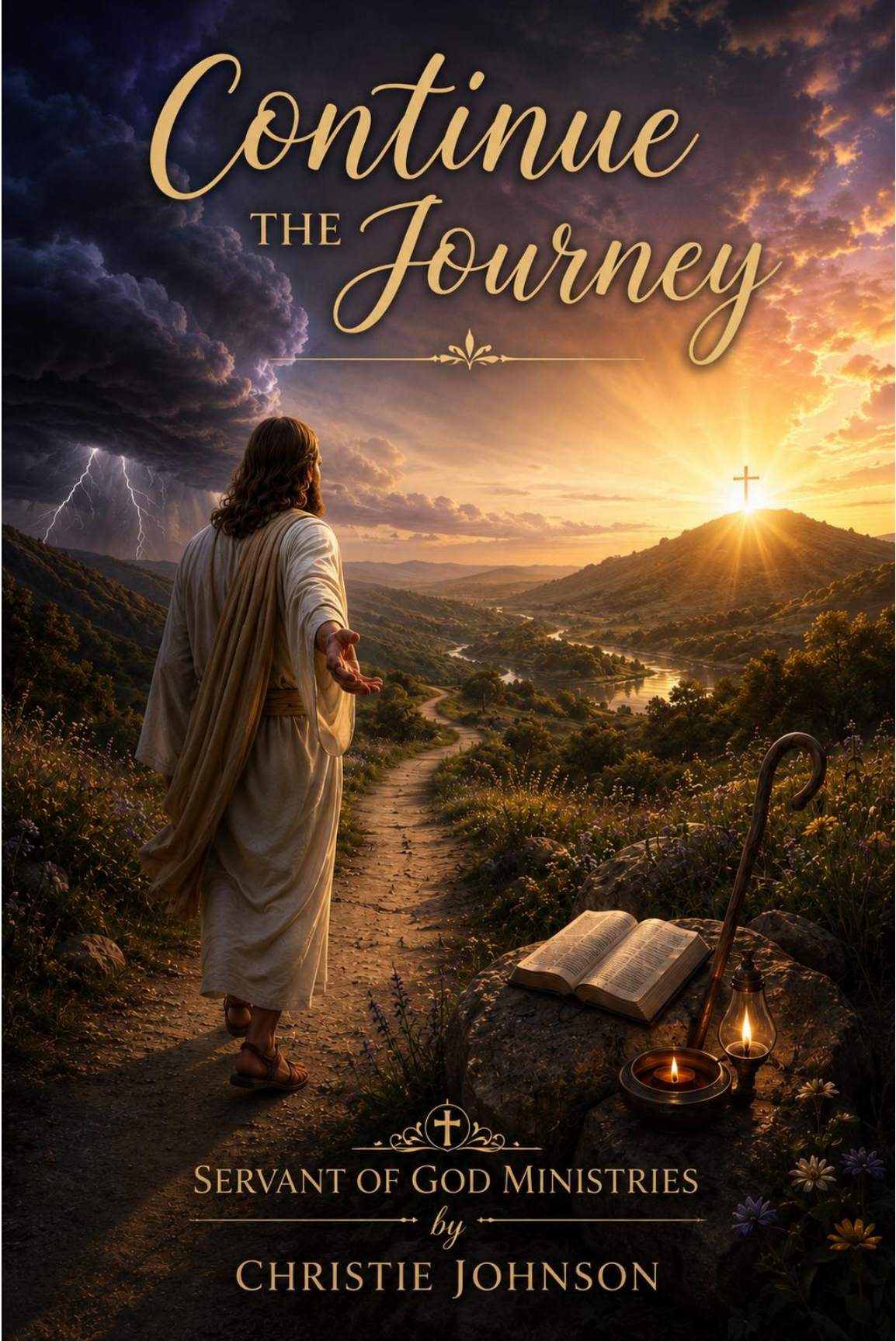




Continue THE Journey


SERVANT OF GOD MINISTRIES
by
CHRISTIE JOHNSON

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Continue the Journey

A Bible Study Journal

A Five-Paper Bible Study Series Based on

Choosing Christ in the Middle of the Battle

Five Bible Studies That Renewed My Mind During One Difficult Week

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"Pointing people to the hope, healing, and transformation found in Jesus Christ."

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Continue the Journey

A Bible Study Journal

Volume 1

Five Psalms That Renewed My Mind During One Difficult Week

The Scriptures Jesus Christ Used to Renew My Mind, Strengthen My Faith, and Draw Me Back to Himself During One of the Hardest Weeks of My Life

Main Scripture

"Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path."

Psalm 119:105

Supporting Scripture

"We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith."

Hebrews 12:2

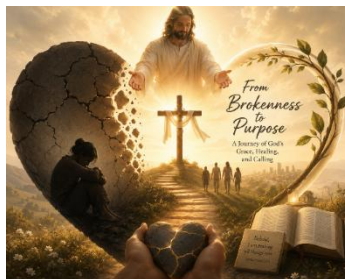
Prayerfully prepared by

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This Volume Includes

1. **Psalm 13** — Learning to Trust God When He Feels Silent
2. **Psalm 27** — Choosing Confidence in the Lord
3. **Psalm 34** — God's Nearness to the Brokenhearted
4. **Psalms 42–43** — Hope for the Downcast Soul
5. **Psalm 73** — When Our Perspective Needs God's Truth

Begin with the Psalm that speaks to your present season or journey through each study in order as the Lord leads you.



Preparing My Heart Before the Study

July 24, 2026 | 11:00 a.m.

Why I Began This Study

As I sat down to spend time with God, I was not looking for answers concerning anyone else. I was seeking encouragement, understanding, and guidance for myself. This time was about allowing God to begin healing me. I knew that I needed to focus on what He was doing within me before I could help another hurting soul.

I had prepared a list of Scriptures that I wanted to study slowly. I did not want to rush through them. I wanted to take my time, listen carefully for God's voice, and allow Him to speak to my heart. I also prepared a list of gospel songs because worship is one of the ways God helps me understand His truth more clearly.

My desire was to allow the Holy Spirit to teach me, guide me, encourage me, and place His truth within my spirit and mind. I wanted to listen, receive what God showed me, and obey Him.

My Prayer Before Beginning This Journey

God,

I am asking You for guidance, clarity, understanding, and encouragement. As I listen to gospel music and study the Scriptures before me, use these tools to draw me closer to Your truth.

Holy Spirit, help me, teach me, and transform me. I am willing, and I am ready.

Cleanse my mind of Satan's lies and open my heart to receive Your truth. When those lies begin controlling my thoughts, help me stop, call upon You, and return to the path You have set before me.

I need Your spiritual transformation right now, at this moment in my journey. Prepare me for Your plans for my life, not merely my own.

I am sorry for this week. Yet even when I was angry, resistant, or overwhelmed, You did not leave me. You continued making Your presence known and reminded me that You would never reject me. Thank You. I will always be grateful.

I am Yours, even in the moments when I struggle to believe it. Open my eyes, mind, heart, and soul to receive Your Word today. Plant Your truth deeply within me, allow it to grow, and replace the lies I have lived by with the truth You speak over my life.

I love You.

Amen.

Bible Study Journal

Day 1 – July 24, 2026



Psalm 13 – "How Long, O LORD?"

Main Question

Before David chooses to trust God, what does he do?

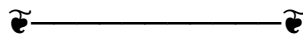
As I studied Psalm 13, one of the first things that stood out to me was David's honesty before God. David does not pretend everything is fine. He pours out his heart and openly tells God exactly how he feels. Yet even while expressing his pain, David remembers God's faithfulness and His promise of salvation. By the end of the psalm, David's focus shifts from his circumstances to worship, trust, and praise. This reminded me that faith does not ignore pain. Faith chooses to trust God in the middle of it.

My Personal Reflection

As I read Psalm 13, I realize how deeply I relate to David. When I am hurting, I do not hide my emotions from God or pretend everything is okay. This week, I poured out my heart and admitted that I was frustrated, angry, confused, and tired. The weight of past wounds, chronic pain, disappointment, and exhaustion felt overwhelming. Like David, I asked difficult questions and told God exactly what I was feeling. I have learned that He is not afraid of my honesty; He invites me to bring everything before Him.

Yet my prayers do not end there. As I continue talking with God, He gently reminds me of His faithfulness. The same God who has carried me through every trial has never abandoned me, even when His silence has been difficult to understand. My circumstances may not change immediately, but my heart begins to change as I remember His promises, love, and grace. The Holy Spirit redirects my focus from what I cannot understand to the One who is always worthy of my trust.

Psalm 13 reminds me that genuine faith does not avoid honest questions. Faith brings those questions to God and then chooses to trust Him. I can come to Him with tears, frustration, and weariness, but I do not have to remain there. As I remember who Jesus is and all He has done for me, my heart begins to worship again. Like David, I want to move from honest lament to confident trust, knowing that God has been faithful and will continue to be faithful.



Another Question

Does God rebuke David for asking these questions?

The answer is no.

God allows David to express his grief honestly. He already knows what is in David's heart, yet He welcomes David's prayers. Sometimes we need to verbalize our fears and struggles before the Lord. Throughout Scripture, God continues to meet His people in their suffering instead of rejecting them because they ask difficult questions.

My Personal Reflection

This truth brings me great comfort because I know what it is like to ask God difficult questions. There have been many times in my life—and especially this week—when I have cried out, "Lord, why?" Yet I have never experienced God pushing me away because of my questions. Instead, I have found that He meets me with His presence, patience, and love. He has taught me that bringing my struggles honestly before Him is an act of faith, not unbelief, because I am choosing to run to Him rather than away from Him. Even when I do not understand His timing or His plans, I know He is listening, walking with me, and gently leading my heart back to trust in Jesus.

Study Bible Notes

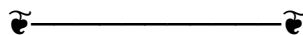
The *Gospel Transformation Study Bible, ESV* contained several observations that helped me understand Psalm 13 more deeply. Unless otherwise noted, all directly quoted wording in this section is taken from the study notes in the *Gospel Transformation Study Bible, ESV*. The page number for each quotation is included with the quotation so readers can locate it in the study Bible.

Psalm 13:1–2

"Only a sovereign Father would allow His suffering children to complain in order to draw them to greater faith. Even more magnanimous is the Lord's endurance of David's demands to 'consider.'"

— *Gospel Transformation Study Bible, ESV, p. 733*

These statements reminded me that God is patient with His children. He is not threatened by honest prayers. Instead, He often uses those moments to strengthen our faith. This helped me understand that bringing my frustration and questions to God is not a rejection of faith; it can become part of the process through which He teaches me to trust Him more deeply.



Cross References

Psalm 79:5

"How long, O LORD? Will you be angry forever? Will your jealousy burn like fire?"

The study notes explain that because we live in a world broken by separation from God and from one another, every believer will eventually cry, **"How long, O Lord?"** Although Asaph could not see how God would answer, he continued praying to the only One who could provide true hope. God ultimately answered humanity's need through Jesus Christ, who became the perfect atoning sacrifice.

—Adapted from the *Gospel Transformation Study Bible*, ESV, p. 805.

My Personal Reflection

This passage reminded me that I am not the only believer who has wondered how long suffering will continue. Like Asaph, I may not understand how or when God will answer, but I can continue bringing my pain to Him because He remains my only true source of hope. The answer may not come in the way or timing I expect, yet the cross assures me that God has already responded to humanity's deepest need through Jesus Christ. Because of Him, my suffering is not the end of my story, and I can continue praying while trusting that God is still working.

Psalm 89:46

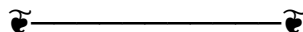
"How long, O LORD? Will you hide yourself forever?"

The study notes point out that God's sovereignty confirms His gracious promises, even during the darkest seasons. Although Ethan did not understand what God was doing, he still lifted his heart to the Lord and continued seeking Him.

—Adapted from the *Gospel Transformation Study Bible*, ESV, p. 818.

My Personal Reflection

This passage reminded me that there are times when God may seem hidden, especially when my circumstances do not make sense. Yet His silence does not mean His absence, and my confusion does not cancel His promises. Like Ethan, I can still lift my heart to the Lord even when I do not understand what He is doing. I may not see the full picture, but I can trust that God remains sovereign, faithful, and present in the darkest seasons of my life.



God's Heart Toward Honest Prayer

One statement from the study notes especially stood out to me. Believers can pray boldly because they know they are coming before a gracious Father. His compassion is warm and tender toward His children when they are suffering, and there comes a time when He will no longer permit their anguish to continue.

—Adapted from the *Gospel Transformation Study Bible, ESV, p. 819.*

My Personal Reflection

This reinforced the truth that God welcomes honest and heartfelt prayer. He does not punish me for sincerely crying out to Him or for admitting that I am hurting, confused, or weary. Instead, He invites me to approach Him as my gracious Father, trusting that His heart is compassionate toward me.

This truth is especially meaningful because pain can sometimes make me feel as though I must hide my emotions or carefully control what I say to God. Yet Scripture shows me that I can speak honestly because He already knows what is in my heart. His steadfast love does not weaken when I struggle, and His faithfulness does not change when my emotions become overwhelmed. I can pray boldly—not because I deserve every answer I seek, but because Jesus has given me access to a loving Father who listens, cares, and remains near to His suffering children.

Psalm 18

The study notes describe God as our:

- Fortress
- Deliverer
- Shield
- Horn of salvation
- Stronghold
- Rock
- Refuge
- Savior

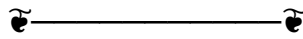
These images reveal God's gracious character and His faithful care for His people. They also find their ultimate fulfillment in Jesus Christ, who rescues, protects, and gives victory to those who trust in Him. The notes further point to Christ as the victorious Warrior who leads His church in the spiritual battle for souls throughout the nations.

—Adapted from the *Gospel Transformation Study Bible, ESV, p. 737.*

My Personal Reflection

This passage reminded me that God is not distant or passive when I am struggling. He is my place of safety, my Defender, and the One who rescues me when I feel surrounded by circumstances I cannot overcome on my own. Each description reveals another part of His care: He gives me stability when life feels uncertain, protection when I feel vulnerable, and refuge when I am emotionally and spiritually exhausted.

Most importantly, these descriptions point me to Jesus Christ. He is not only the Savior who delivered me from sin; He continues leading, protecting, and strengthening me in the battles I face each day. I do not have to fight through suffering, fear, or spiritual opposition in my own strength. Christ has already secured the ultimate victory, and I can follow Him with confidence, knowing that my refuge and salvation are found in Him.



Job 1–2

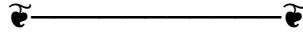
The study notes explain that although God permitted Job to suffer, Satan could only go as far as God allowed. God placed clear limits on Satan's power and protected Job's life even while allowing him to be tested. This shows that Job's suffering was never outside God's knowledge, authority, or control.

The book of Job does not deny the reality or severity of human suffering. Instead, it reminds us that our pain is never beyond God's attention, and our difficulties are never beyond His purposes. Even when we cannot understand why suffering occurs, God remains sovereign and continues accomplishing His will.

—Adapted from the *Gospel Transformation Study Bible, ESV, pp. 669–670.*

My Personal Reflection

Job's story reminded me that suffering does not mean God has lost control or stopped caring about me. There are times when I cannot understand why He allows certain trials to continue, especially when the pain feels overwhelming and the answers do not come. Yet Job's experience shows me that God is still present, still watching, and still setting boundaries even when I cannot see what He is doing. This does not make suffering easy, but it gives me a foundation upon which I can stand. My life is not outside God's hands, and the difficulties I face are not greater than His authority. I may not understand His purposes immediately, but I can trust that He has not abandoned me and that He is still working within my life.



Summary of Today's Study

Today's study showed me several important truths:

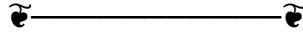
- God welcomes honest prayer.
- God is not offended by sincere questions.
- David moved from lament and confusion to worship and trust.
- God's character does not change when our circumstances or emotions change.
- Throughout Scripture, faithful believers have cried, "How long, O Lord?"
- God's apparent silence does not mean He is absent.
- Our greatest hope is found in Jesus Christ, who fulfilled God's redemptive plan and became the perfect atoning sacrifice for sin.
- God remains sovereign over suffering and faithfully accomplishes His purposes.
- I can bring my pain, anger, weariness, and questions to God without fear of rejection.
- Trust does not require me to understand everything; it requires me to remember who God is.

My Mindset After Today's Study

When I began this study, I was still carrying the emotional weight of one of the most difficult weeks of my life. I came before God needing clarity, healing, encouragement, and a renewed mind. Psalm 13 and the surrounding passages reminded me that honest lament is not the opposite of faith. It can be the place where faith begins to grow again.

My circumstances had not suddenly changed by the time I finished studying, but something within me had begun to change. I was reminded that God had not forgotten me, rejected me, or lost control of my life. He had listened to every question, remained present through every painful moment, and patiently led my heart back toward His truth.

I ended this study still aware of my pain but no longer allowing that pain to define what I believed about God. I could not yet see every answer, but I could see His faithfulness more clearly. Like David, I was beginning to move from asking, "**How long, O Lord?**" toward declaring, "**I will trust in Your steadfast love.**"



Final Statement

After a week in which my emotions became louder than everything I knew to be true, God used His Word to quiet the lies, steady my heart, and remind me that I was still held securely in His faithful love.

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