



Study Guide

Study Guide for Personal Reflection and Discussion

By Linda Evans Shepherd

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Some names and details have been changed to protect privacy.

Worship Can Change Your Life

It's time to encounter God in a way that will not only change your perspective of him, but will change your perspective of your life. As you study, you will find a deeper revelation of God, which will call you to a deeper level of worship.

It's time to praise God – for who he is and all he has done. – *Linda Evans Shepherd*

The Living Story

Enjoying a Powerful Walk with God

Study Guide

LINDA EVANS SHEPHERD

Get ready to pray through this book. If you are not in a discussion group, jot your answers into a journal or notepad. If you are in a group, you should select one or more of the worship exercises to do together each time you meet.

Introduction (suggested to be used with Chapter One.)

1. Reread the Barna quote at the beginning of the introduction. Imagine what it would be like to take a walk through the woods with your eyes closed. Now imagine what it would be like to walk through the woods with your eyes focuses on a hand-held mirror. Discuss the difference between these two walks and how they would relate to real life?
2. Next imagine what it would be like to walk though the wood with your focus on God? What would that look like? Do you think you'd trip and fall? Why or why not?
3. Read the prayer at the end of this introduction, together as a group, then talk about what it personally means to you.

Chapter One

1. Why is it important to understand God and our relationship with him? Can you, based on the story of Eve's deception in the Garden of Eden, craft a statement defining man's relationship with God?
2. Discuss and craft a statement defining God's relationship with man.
3. Who is Satan and why and how did he kidnap man in the Garden of Eden? Can Satan still kidnap people? How? How can people break free of his dominion?
4. Why did the religious leaders of the day plot against Jesus? What did Jesus reveal about them? Do we need to guard against these same temptations? How?
5. How did a 'sacrificial lamb' break the power of sin and death? Reread/repray the prayer at the end of Act Three, then discuss it. Give thankful comments concerning the fact that Jesus set you free.

6. Explain God's relationship with creation based on Linda's discussion with her New Age friend.

Chapter Two

1. What is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs? How does self-actualization compare to God-actualization? Which is better and why?
2. Why did God favor Abel's sacrifice over Cain's sacrifice? Why did Cain kill his brother? What would have been a better solution to establish a worship relationship with God?
3. Do you think it's possible to cheat the Lord in worship? How? How can we best remedy this? Why should we?
4. According to Jesus, it's not what goes into a man that makes him 'unclean' it's what comes out of a man. What did Jesus mean by this? Give examples of things that could 'come out' of a man to show he loves God.
5. Why do we need to fear and respect God? Why did the disciples bow down and worship him when they saw him walking on water?
6. What was Otto's final solution to the theft of the pineapples? How does this story apply to our own lives? Make a list of things we need to give to God.
7. Discuss Worship Experience Two.

Chapter Three

1. Many people count their life's circumstances as rejection from God. Should they? Reread Romans 8:28. In light of grief and tragedies, could this Scripture really be true? How?
2. Think about the 'bird nest story' and discuss whether or not our perspective of our life's circumstances is always the best perspective. How might God's perspective be different from ours?
3. 'No matter what worship' is when we worship God despite our circumstances. Can you give reasons why this is a good idea? Can you think of examples from your own life – of times you worshipped despite your circumstances? How did 'no matter what worship' pay off for Abraham?
4. What would happen if, as A. Z. Tozer recommended, the church had a restored vision of the Most High God? What would happen if you had a restored vision of God? How would that change your life?
5. Reread Matt Redman's description of God that Linda shared from Redman's book, *Facedown*. Create a list of attributes to describe God.
6. Even when we accept our circumstances, is it okay to ask God to change or direct them? Write a prayer to do that for your own circumstances.
7. Wendy Lawton compares God to a potter. Can you expound on this idea as how this relates to our relationship with God?

Chapter Four

1. Reread the House MD definition of worship, then write your own.
2. List things people might unknowingly worship then discuss how these things could enslave them.
3. How can one break free of worshipping a false God?
4. Reread God's rules in Exodus chapter 20: 1 – 17 and talk about how this standard compares to our lives. Based on this, are we good enough to meet God's expectations? What will happen to us if we don't?
5. Discuss why Jesus is our remedy to our failure to live up to God's standard.
6. If we can't meet the standard of the Ten Commandments, can we toss them out of our lives? Why or why not? Why should we even bother trying?

Chapter Five

1. Reread Exodus 13: 20-22 and then describe the pillar of cloud. Why do you think God choose to reveal his presence to his people in this way? Do you think God still guides his people? How?
2. Describe how Jesus is like the Ark of the Covenant and the three holy items inside the box?
3. Explain the Mercy Seat's function and compare that with Jesus.
4. Read Malachi 1: 6-8 then discuss how it's possible to cheat God through our worship? Give examples of how people today cheat God in worship.
5. Should we follow God's presence or should we invite God's presence to follow us? Compare these thoughts to what happened to the Israelites when they took the Ark of the Covenant

with them to the Battle of Jericho. Compare that to what happened when they took the Ark to the Battle of Ashdod. What was the difference in these two battles?

6. Explain where the Ark of the Covenant is today? How is it that God's presence can be in our very beings?

Chapter Six

1. Why wasn't Elisha afraid of the King of Syria's army? How was this story like the movie *Honey I Shrunk the Kids*?
2. List the five ways God see our enemy's and acknowledge this by repraying the prayer in this segment of the chapter.
3. Like Gideon's example, what are the three things we must do before we march into battle?
4. When does God lose a battle? How can we insure that we never lose a battle?
5. What are the five things Jehoshaphat did to restore himself to God and prepare for battle?
Why did these steps restore Jehoshaphat to God?
6. Next, list the five-pronged battle plan that God gave Jehoshaphat. Why did this battle plan work?
7. Think about the Bible stories covered in this chapter then discuss how worship wins the battle.
8. What are the six things Linda suggests if the battle is not going your way?

Chapter Seven

1. How was it that David was able to win the battle against Goliath?
2. How did the praise songs David sang calm King Saul? Tell about a time worship music soothed your soul. Read Psalms 23 together, then talk about what this 'song' means to you.
3. What is a lament and why was David known as the King of Laments? Read Psalms 57 together, then talk about what this 'lament' means to you.
4. Have someone read Psalms 42: 1-3, 5, 6. Discuss why we need to be hungry for God.
5. Share prayer requests with the group, then pray for one another. When you are finished, together read Psalm 13 as a prayer.

Chapter Eight

1. Reread the first paragraph of this chapter and discuss what Linda means by worship is our reason for existence. Explain the how and why God completes our souls.
2. What did Jesus mean when he told the woman at the well that the day was coming when true worshippers would worship in spirit and truth?
3. Read Mark 1:8. John the Baptist said that the one coming would baptize with the Holy Spirit. What did he mean by that?
4. Why do we need to be led by the spirit? How do we do that?
5. Read Galatians 5:22-26, then list the fruits of the spirit.
6. Read what Jesus said to Thomas in John 14: 5-6. Then consider how do we worship in truth?
7. What does it mean to worship in the right attitude? How do we do that?

Chapter Nine

1. Talk about Linda's story about the truck driver and discuss how life is like a toll road. Who will pay your toll? What do you have to do to receive this gift?
2. Reread the Narrator's prophecies of Christ from the Old Testament, starting with Psalms 41:9 through Isaiah 53: 10-12. Discuss each prophecy as it relates to the life and death of Jesus. Do you think these prophecies could have been faked, why or why not?
3. Describe what 'redeemer' means and explain how Jesus redeemed us.
4. Talk about Linda's story about her husband's climb on the Maroon Bells outside of Aspen. How does this story symbolize what Jesus did for us on the cross?
5. What will keep us from being a true worshipper?
6. How can we become a true worshipper?

Chapter Ten

1. What happened in the temple at the moment that Jesus died on the cross? What did this symbolize?
2. Talk about the story Linda told about the older woman whose blouses were covered with spots. How is this like us? What do we need to do before we can stand before God without blame or spot?
3. Linda says that we can freely come to Christ, but we can't freely live for Christ. What does she mean by that? What is the price we must pay to live for Christ? How does this make us a living sacrifice?

4. Read Ephesians 5: 15-29. According to this, how are we supposed to live our lives? Who are we to 'submit' to?
5. Read Romans 4:14-32. In light of this passage, is it possible to live without sin? What's the solution?
6. Read Luke 21:17. Why does the world hate Christians? Is there a way to make them love us? How then do we treat the world?

Chapter Eleven

1. How has your 'revelation' of who Jesus is changed as you've read this book? If you were to write a friend a letter to describe the resurrected Christ, what would you say?
2. Take a look at the report cards Jesus gave to the seven churches. Based on that, what the basic problems the churches need to overcome.
3. Talk about the problems of the church of Ephesus. What exactly were they doing to displease Jesus? If you were going to call their pastor to advise him on how to correct the problem, what ideas would you have for him? What advice would you give him to help correct the problem? What are some ways that you yourself can benefit from the advice you created?
4. How do these church reports change your perspective of your own walk with God? What are some areas you need to work on?
5. What is Jesus really looking for in a church? How can you help build a church like that?
6. Reread the list of the things the 'lamb who was slain' has the power to do? How does this list translate to the 'buddy' image held by many in today's church?
7. When Jesus knocks at the door, what door is he knocking at? If you haven't already done so, lead the group in prayer to invite him into every area of your home, ministry, church and life.

Chapter Twelve

1. This book describes two kidnappings in two different gardens in two different ages. How were these kidnappings related? How did pride play a role in the first kidnapping? How did the absence of pride play a role in the second kidnapping?
2. We've just covered the entire story of the romance between God and man that is the undercurrent of the entire Bible. Try to explain the story of this romance in only a few sentences.
3. Why do you think God commanded we rest from our work? How will this act of rest give us better balance in our relationship with God?
4. What were the real reasons Martha got in trouble with Jesus? What could she have done differently?
5. How is the act of worship and service similar? Create a basic list of things all Christians can do to serve God, then create a list of things God may be calling you to do.
6. Read Isaiah 6: 1-8. Why did the Seraph touch Isaiah's lips with a burning coal? How can we too find that kind of cleansing? What was Isaiah's reaction to his encounter with the Lord? Why should we have a similar reaction?
7. We've encountered God in the pages of this book. What will your reaction to that encounter be? Have a time of prayer for dedication and service to God.

About the Author



Linda Evans Shepherd is the author of over thirty books including *When You Can't Find God-How to Ignite the Power of His Presence*, *When You Don't Know What to Pray-How to Talk to God About Anything*, and *When You Need a Miracle-How to Ask God for the Impossible* (2012) as well as the bestselling novel series, *The Potluck Club* and *The Potluck Catering Club*, written with Eva Marie Everson.

An internationally recognized speaker, Linda has spoken in almost every state in the country and around the world. You can learn more about her speaking ministry at: www.LindaEvansShepherd.com.

Linda is the president of Right to the Heart Ministries. She is the CEO of AWSA (Advanced Writers and Speakers Association) ministry to Christian authors and speakers. She also publishes the website GodTest.com, the electronic magazine Right to the Heart of Women and the blog Finding God Daily. To learn more about these and other ministries, go to: www.VisitLinda.com

Linda has been married to Paul for over thirty years and is the mother of their two children.

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THE BOOK YOU ARE DISCUSSING: *The Living Story, Enjoying a Powerful Walk with God* by Linda Evans Shepherd - portrays a 'bigger picture of God' that will captivate your heart as it helps you put your relationship with God into focus.

Through key Bible stories that will take you from Eden to eternity, Shepherd shows how God rescued us so that we can have a more intimate walk with him. But more than pointing out that we can walk with God, Linda shows you how. She gives the how-to's of developing a worshipful 'state of mind' so you can reap the benefits of a richer life filled with joy and purpose.

In her joyful, gentle style, Linda leads readers into God's Holy presence. It's as if she were sitting in your living room sharing the secrets of the Christian walk directly from Scripture, proofed by her own life experiences. As you read along, not only will you learn what you were saved from, you will learn what you were saved for; an intimate relationship with God.

This is the ultimate life-style worship and prayer book that will give you an overview of the Bible as it pulls you into your own story with God.

For more information about the book, go to: www.EnjoyLivingStory.com