

Knowing God — My Father

Applying the names of God to my personal life

Group Member Guide

By Jimmy Ray Lee, D.Min.

Communications should be addressed to:
Living Free Ministries, Inc.
P. O. Box 22127
Chattanooga, TN 37422-2127

Scripture taken from the Holy Bible, New International Version.® Copyright ©1972, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.

©Living Free, 1993, 1998. All rights reserved.

All rights are reserved. No part of the material protected by this copyright notice may be reproduced or utilized in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system, without written permission from the Living Free Ministries.

ISBN 10: 1-58119-007-7

ISBN 13: 978-1-58119-007-6



Cover Photo: Doug Barnette
Cover Design: Graphic Advertising
Layout: Louise Lee

About the Author

Dr. Jimmy Ray Lee is the founder and president emeritus of Living Free, Inc. He is the author of *Understanding the Times* and several small group studies published by Living Free, Inc. Under the direction and guidance of Dr. Lee, Living Free, Inc. produced Living Free—a high impact, video-based training. This training helps churches develop Christ-centered small groups that deal with the contemporary problems that people face today.

Dr. Lee is the founder and honorary chairman of Project 714 (now known as National Center for Youth Issues), a chemical prevention/intervention program for schools. He also founded an inner-city ministry called Ark Ministries that reached 600 to 700 young people weekly. He started the Chattanooga Teen Challenge and served as its president for three years. Jimmy served as Nashville Teen Challenge executive director during its formative years.

In 1983 he was awarded the "Service to Mankind Award" presented by the Highland Sertoma Club in Hixson, Tennessee.

Knowing God — My Father

Applying the names of God to my personal life

Contents

	Page
Preface	1
Getting Started	2
Suggested Group Format	3
Pronunciation of the Names of God	4
The Attributes of God	5
Session 1 – A Prayer for You	7
Session 2 – My Father – My Provider	12
Session 3 – My Father – My Healer	17
Session 4 – My Father – My Banner	22
Session 5 – My Father – My Sanctifier	26
Session 6 – My Father – My Peace	31
Session 7 – My Father – My Righteousness	36
Session 8 – My Father – He Is There	40
Session 9 – My Father – My Shepherd	44
Suggested Reading	50

Preface

The *Knowing God—My Father* group is for those who want to grow in their knowledge of God as Father by applying the names of God to their personal lives. Each session highlights an aspect of God’s character and how He meets human need at the right time and the right place.

The purpose of *Knowing God—My Father* is to help participants strengthen their relationship with their heavenly Father by studying the various names of God in the Scripture which apply to His works. It is important that each participant prayerfully apply each biblical principle with a sincere desire to know God as his/her personal Father.

The group should meet each week for one hour and fifteen minutes, but more time may be planned if necessary. The material is designed for nine sessions. As a leader, be sure to review all resource references provided in the Resources and Related Reading Section and the *Small Group Skills Guide*, *Core Team Manual*, and *Understanding the Times and Knowing What to Do*. These resources are available from Living Free.

Knowing God—My Father is not a substitute for medical or psychological care. We never advise anyone to stop taking medication or discontinue their doctor’s care. It is our prayer that God will use you as a “Living Free” in the lives of many people. May the Lord bless you.

Getting Started

Group Size

We suggest that each *Knowing God—My Father* group have two group leaders (facilitators) and a maximum of twelve participants. Having more than twelve may prevent some from being a part of much-needed discussion.

Preparation Time

The facilitator's material is written in an almost word-for-word dialogue. However, it is hoped that as you come to know and understand the concepts presented, you will be able to “personalize” each session to fit your own style better. Highlight the points you want to emphasize and make notes for yourself.

Your group is unique—so adapt questions to their needs and situations. Be sensitive to each person who is in your group.

Keep in mind that the answers provided for the discussion questions are there only as a tool to assist you and may not be the only “right” answers to the questions being asked.

Become thoroughly familiar with the four elements of each session:

- Introduction
- Self-Awareness
- Spiritual Awareness
- Application

You will find more detail about these on the following pages.

The facilitators should meet prior to each session to pray and make final plans. They should also meet briefly after each session to discuss what happened during the meeting and go over any follow-up that may be needed.

Knowing God Group Workbooks

Before Session 1, the *Knowing God—My Father Group Workbook* should be distributed to each group member. Facilitators should be thoroughly familiar with the workbook before the first meeting.

During the orientation, you will encourage group members to complete the appropriate assignments prior to each group meeting. Through the readings and other exercises in the workbook, group members can come to each session better prepared for meaningful discussion. Note that while group members are asked to read and think about the Scriptures to be covered, the discussion questions have been left out of the workbooks in order to enhance the spontaneity of the group process.

Suggested Group Format

The group format for each session consists of four elements: Introduction, Self-Awareness, Spiritual Awareness, and Application. There is a reason for each phase. The facilitators should always plan each session with this format in mind.

Part I—Introduction (10 minutes)

Begin with prayer. The facilitator may pray or may ask one of the group members to lead in prayer. After the prayer, a sharing question helps put the group at ease and makes the members more comfortable in being a part of the discussion. The lead facilitator should respond to the sharing question first, followed by the co-facilitator. This helps the group members to feel safer in participating in the exercise. After the facilitators have shared, the group members will share one after another around the circle. Always remind group members they are not expected to share if they do not wish to do so. The rule is that everyone works within his or her comfort level and is welcome to pass.

This is not the time for detailed conversation, so ask the members of the group to keep their comments brief. If a person is obviously in pain during the exercise, the facilitator should interrupt the sharing and pray for the person in pain. After prayer, the exercise may resume.

Part II—Self-Awareness (20-25 minutes)

After the sharing question, the facilitator will lead the group into the Self-Awareness phase. Self-Awareness is a time to discuss the practical issues involved in knowing God. It is important to stay on the subject matter. This is a time to focus on needs and healing, not to have a “martyr” or “pity party.”

It is suggested in Self-Awareness that the facilitators ask the group members to share as they wish rather than going around the circle as in the introduction phase. This is because people are at various comfort levels, and they should not feel pressured to self-disclose if they are uncomfortable. As the group continues to meet, members will feel more and more comfortable in being a part of the discussion.

Remember, prayer is always in order. If a group member is hurting during this phase, stop and pray. One of the facilitators may lead in prayer or ask another group member to pray. This says to the group members that each one is important and that you care about each individual.

Part III—Spiritual Awareness

(20-25 minutes)

After the Self-Awareness phase, the facilitator will lead the group into the bible study time. Having briefly explained the topic, the facilitator should assign the Scriptures listed in the Facilitator’s Guide to group members. When each Scripture is called by the facilitator, the group member should read the verse(s). After the verses are read, give time for discussion.

Part IV—Application (20 minutes)

This part is actually a continuation of Part III. Ask for volunteers to share their reflections on the question. The facilitators should emphasize the importance of the group members’ applying biblical principles to their lives. Help begins with right thinking. The Bible says, “Be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Romans 12:2). Obedience to the Word should follow with right behavior. Right feelings will follow right thinking and right behavior.

Pronunciation of the Names of God

Jehovah-jireh

je-ho'-vah yeer'-eh

Jehovah-rapha

je-ho'-vah raw-faw'

Jehovah-nissi

je-ho'-vah nis-see

Jehovah-M'Kaddesh

je-ho'-vah m'-kad'-desh

Jehovah-shalom

je-ho'-vah shal-lom

Jehovah-tsidkenu

je-ho'-vah tsid-kay'-noo

Jehovah-shammah

je-ho'-vah sham'-mah

Jehovah-rohi

je-ho'-vah ro'-ee

The Attributes of God

God is omnipotent (Matthew 19:26).

God is omnipresent (Psalm 139:8; Jeremiah 23:23-24).

God is omniscient (Psalm 147:4-5).

God is love (1 John 4:8).

God is holy (1 Peter 1:16; 1 John 1:5).

God is a spirit (John 4:24).

God is changeless (Psalm 102:27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17).

God is self-existent (Exodus 3:14).

God is infinite (Psalm 145:3).

God is truth (Deuteronomy 32:4; John 17:3).

God is life (John 5:26).

God is sovereign (2 Samuel 7:28; 1 Chronicles 29:10-13; John 6:44).

Session 1 *A Prayer for You*

Introduction



Allow 10 Minutes

Opening Prayer

Sharing Question

Welcome to our first *Knowing God—My Father* meeting. Have each member of the group introduce him/herself. Have each to describe briefly what they want to receive during the weeks of study. The facilitator should begin the go-around.

Self-Awareness



Allow 20–25 Minutes

The goal of *Knowing God — My Father* is to look at ways we can grow in our knowledge of God as Father by applying the names of God to our personal lives. Beginning with Session 2, the various names of God presented in the scripture which apply to His works will be highlighted through an awareness and application of biblical principles. To be effective, let us prayerfully apply each biblical principle with an earnest desire to know God as our personal Father.

What do you want to receive from this group?

Spiritual Awareness Lead-In

We approach (or have access to) God through Christ Jesus our Lord. Paul writes, “In him [Christ] and through faith in him [Christ] we may approach God with freedom and confidence” (Ephesians 3:12).

In view of this verse, how can we approach God?

Spiritual-Awareness



Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians has personal significance.

Ephesians 3:10-14

There is a reason to “kneel before the Father.”

In view of verses 10-13, why does the eternal plan of God through Christ give us reason to bow before God?

In what ways does the term “I kneel” note a reverence for God?

Ephesians 3:15

Part of God’s family is in heaven and part is on the earth.

In light of John 1:12, how do we “become children of God?”

Although some view all mankind as the children of God, why is this not true according to John 8:42-47?

Ephesians 3:16

Paul prayed that the believers might be strengthened.

How does Paul say we are strengthened?

Ephesians 3:17

Paul prayed “that Christ may dwell” in the hearts of believers.

How does Christ dwell in our hearts?

Ephesians 3:18

Paul prayed for believers to grasp the “love of Christ.”

In light of this verse, describe the vastness of God’s love.

Ephesians 3:19

Christ’s love for us surpasses knowledge.

What hope does this verse give you in view of God’s love being more than theory or intellectualism?

Paul prayed that believers be filled with “the fullness of God.” Christ was filled with “grace and truth” (John 1:14).

What qualities of God’s character do you see most needful in your life at this time?

Ephesians 3:20-21

God is able “to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine.”

According to this verse, there is a condition for this promise. What is it?

Who should receive praise?

How long should this praise continue?

Deuteronomy 4:7
God is near His people.

When is He near?



Application

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians clearly shows the love and power of God available in our personal lives.

Using Paul's model and content, put into your own words a prayer for yourself. Share with the group.

Closing Prayer