

## STUDY GUIDE

Monday, April 26- Saturday, May 1

**Monday, April 26.** Throughout the Bible, one important word that keeps popping up is *remember*. It makes sense that God would place this word prominently and repeatedly in His message to the amnesiac human race. We forget a lot of things. But we'd remember many of them if we'd just hang onto one answer to one question: Who am I? It's strange that even we who have become God's children should be so prone to forget our identity. If you or I were the child of a president, king, famous actor or author, you'd think we'd remain constantly aware of our heritage, even if we wanted to avoid publicity. Maybe our memory loss is because 100-percent-forgiven-child-of-the-Creator is simply hard for us to believe. To know our purpose in life, we must learn who we are, and we do that by recognizing WHOSE we are. Our purpose and identity grow clearer as we come to know God better. Read Ephesians 1:3-14.

**Tuesday, April 27** – God's will is our perfect guide in life. Read Romans 12:2. He makes it available, but we have to find it. He puts on our shoulders the responsibility to seek His will and make choices to go His way in His strength. God provides our life's direction by means of our gifts, passions, and struggles. Read Romans 12:3-8 and 1 Corinthians 12 to learn about the gifts and talents God gives us. When you pursue the passion God has placed in your heart, He loves it!! He finds joy in your living out your giftedness and being who He created you to be. We not only feel fulfilled as we live from our passions, but we sense God's pleasure as well. If you maintain one central passion for God, you'll have little problem keeping your other, personalized passions focused correctly. What are some of your personal passions? Read Proverbs 2:1-11, Acts 2:42, 17:11, 1 Corinthians 16:15. How do your passions help you discern God's direction for you?

**Wednesday, April 28** – In life, difficult change is inevitable; half of our battle is learning to accept that reality. The other half is seeking God's wisdom for dealing with each storm. We can't prevent the hurricane winds of change...But we can prepare for them and learn from prior storms. Read Job 5:7, James 4:14-15, and 1 Peter 4:12. When God allows us to go through struggles, problems and difficulties, we learn to depend on Him. We learn our own limits and are reminded to look to Him for what we need most. As we learn to depend on Him, He fills us with His power and His strength. Read James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 1:6-9 and Romans 5:3-4. Why are difficulties in our lives so valuable? According to these passages, what can you do to cooperate with God's purposes in your hardships? The winds of change will either make you stronger or knock you down. By putting biblical principles into practice, we'll see that we can not only survive the winds of change, but we can harness them to fill our sails and propel us forward.

**Thursday, April 29** – If you evaluate status symbols, then you're really trying to give the appearance of a healthy, well-balanced, successful life without the reality of it. You're trying to change from the outside in, thinking you will feel better about yourself on the inside if you change your settings and props on the outside. We think, 'If I change my looks, if I change my house, if I change my car, then it's going to change me. Then I will be truly content.' Only one problem – it doesn't work. Some of the "virtues" that our world endorses – busy-ness, power, oneupmanship, the easy life – can quickly become dis-eases of the soul, when we count on them to give us real satisfaction, real life. And we know something's wrong. Abundant life is only found as we cultivate internal maturity in constant connection with God. But the paths that lead to the metamorphosis of the soul are unpopular and not often traveled. In your everyday life, what are some specific ways you can take responsibility for your internal transformation. Read 2 Corinthians 3:18, 2 Corinthians 4:6-7 and Ephesians 4:22-24.

**Friday, April 30** – If you only had one month to live, most likely you would want to review your life and examine your character. You would want to do all you could to learn from the mistakes in your past, iron out any wrinkles that had developed, and live your remaining days at peace. You would want your life to be integrated and whole, not compartmentalized and fragmented as we often experience when we're going through the motions of life and settling for less than we were made to enjoy. If you were living deliberately and passionately and were fully alive, you would want to live with integrity. Integrity is the opposite of image. Integrity is when your private life matches your public image. When what you see is what you get – that's integrity. Integrity is who you are when no one is looking. Read Matthew 23:1-7, 23-28. If you notice any parallels between their divided living and yours, ask God's forgiveness and then talk with Him about ways to better align our saying and doing.

**Saturday, May 1.** A check up for your attitude. ✓ Most of the time I remember and believe I'm God's child. ✓ I'm usually confident that God has a special purpose for me. ✓ I have a pretty good handle on my gifts and what God

wants me to do with them. ✓ I can describe my God-given passion and how they are directing my life. ✓ I expect to deal with difficult changes, because they're a reality of life. ✓ I regularly take time for stillness and solitude with God. ✓ During troubled times, I usually turn first to God. ✓ Those who know me best also know that my private life is the same as my public life. ✓ I know that God can and will do amazing things in and through my life. How did you do? Pray for the attitudes you need to work on.