

Know What You're up Against

Whenever a person goes to battle he or she studies the tactics and movements of the opposing army. You are part of a battle, and this quarter's material will help you identify your enemy's ploys and develop strategies to claim your victory in Christ.

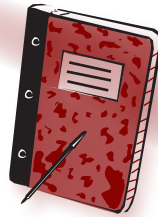


The Living My Faith Devotional Bible Study

is designed to help you dig into God's Word.

Each lesson offers devotions for Monday

through Saturday, along with worksheet to be completed during your group study and articles that will help you better understand and apply God's Word.



Journal: Purchase a journal or notebook to record your personal thoughts and prayers. Bring your journal and student book to class

each week so that you can take notes during the lesson or write any special insights you gain from a particular activity. You may also use the journal for sermon notes or for prayer requests.



Bible study tools: In order for you to dig into God's Word, consider using a Bible dictionary and a concordance. If you are not familiar with these helpful guides, ask your pastor or youth leader for a recommendation.

Or visit an online Bible tools Web site, such as [www .blueletterbible.org](http://www.blueletterbible.org). This site offers commentaries, maps, and many other tools to help you in your Bible study.

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Your Supreme Commander

Monday

The Christian life is a battlefield.

1. Read Ephesians 6:12. What do believers battle against?

God has given us every resource we need to fight our spiritual battles. You will become better acquainted with these resources throughout this quarter's study.

First, though, you need to know some important things about your Supreme Commander. And you need to know that while the battle is real, the outcome is already decided.

2. Read 1 Chronicles 29:11 and list the things that belong to God.

3. What did Jesus say about victory in John 16:33?

4. Read Revelation 20:7–10 and describe Jesus' final victory.

You don't have to wait to have victory. Read 1 Corinthians 15:57.

5. How can you have victory today?

Tuesday

A word that describes God is “ruler.” Look up each reference below, and write what God rules.

1. Proverbs 21:1; Romans 13:1
2. Colossians 1:16
3. 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20
4. Psalm 47:2, 7, 8

According to these verses, God rules everything and everyone. But not everyone obeys Him.

5. How do you respond to God as your ruler? Do you say yes or no to Him?

Ask Him today to help you say yes.

Wednesday

Some people think that because God rules the whole universe, He must be distant and uncaring. But that’s not how the Bible describes God. Look up the following references, and write how God treats those He rules.

1. John 3:16
2. Romans 5:8
3. 1 John 4:9, 10
4. Based on these verses, does God love you?
5. How has God shown His love to you?

Write down three ways God demonstrated His love to you today. Then thank God that even though He is perfect, He loves imperfect people.

Thursday

As well as being loving and personal, God also has great knowledge.

1. According to Job 37:16, what is God's knowledge like?
2. Read Psalm 139:1–4; then list the things God knows about you.

Realizing God knows you can be comforting, especially when you think no one else cares about you.

3. Read 1 Kings 8:39. What else does God know about you?

Sometimes we can fool others by our actions or words, but God is never fooled. He always knows the truth that's inside. Take a moment to thank God for knowing you so well, and confess any known sin in your life.

Friday

Another characteristic God has as the supreme ruler of the universe is His ability to be everywhere at the same time. This ability is called "omnipresence."

1. Read Psalm 139:7–12. List all the places where God is.

Can you escape from Him?

Can you "lose" God?

Can God "lose" you?

2. How does the fact that God is everywhere affect your life?

Saturday

God is also all-powerful. He gives to you, His child, His unlimited power to fight spiritual battles.

What do the following Scriptures say about God's power?

1. Genesis 18:14
2. Luke 18:27
3. Ephesians 3:20
4. Describe one area of your life that seems hard. How can God's power help you in that area?

When you face a struggle between doing right and doing wrong, ask God to help you use His power to obey. It's available if you'll just ask and believe that He'll give it!

WEEK 1

Memory Verse

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might" (Ephesians 6:10).

Confidence in Our Captain

by Shelley A. Gale

Every day when I put on my police uniform and slide into my police car, other people's lives are in my hands.

Imagine the responsibility that I bear. I have the task of training my partner how to be a cop and how to stay alive. I have to lead him into every situation imaginable. Not only do I have to look out for the two of us, but I have to look out for citizens as well. "To protect and to serve," that's a police officer's motto.

My superiors have given my partner and me all the tools of policing. We have received bulletproof vests, batons, pepper spray, handcuffs, radios, pistols, shotguns, M-16s, beanbag shotguns, electric tasers, and of course, our high performance vehicles. We are trained following orders, in tactics, and in to-hand self-defense. Our training tools are meant to keep us all alive.

P

Many times I have been forced into life-or-death situations. Each time I have to willingly put my very life into the hands of my sergeant, lieutenant, or other incident commander. This is when my training comes into play. All police officers are trained to obey an order from a superior immediately, completely, and without question.

I remember one time we responded to a robbery-in-progress call. I was told to guard an exterior door and, no matter what, I was not to take my eyes off that door. So there I stayed with my gun out, guarding a big, gray, steel door at the rear of a building.

Meanwhile, I could hear my fellow officers ordering suspects to put their hands up and to lie on the ground. I wanted to peek around the corner and get in on the action.

After a few moments, though, my big, gray door slowly opened, and two men peeked out. I was crouched behind a trash can, so they didn't see me. They came out, and the door locked behind them. They were carrying two big satchels filled with stolen cash.

I jumped up and yelled, "Freeze!" I heard the sound of steel hitting the ground as they dropped their guns. I called for help, and three more officers arrived. We immediately took the suspects into custody.

Had I left my position, two desperate criminals would have been able to walk up behind me and the other officers. Who knows how many of us they could have taken out? But because I remembered my training, I did not take my eyes off that door. Following my commander's orders probably prevented the deaths of myself and my fellow officers.

Even though I wanted to be where the action was, I did as I was told. At one point I almost left my position to go to where the action appeared to be. But as it turned out, I captured the real criminals.

Complete and total obedience is required to do my job as a police officer. Complete and total reliance on the instructions of my superior officer prevents others from getting hurt or killed and prevents the escape

of dangerous criminals. Complete and total obedience is complete and total faith in the one giving the commands.

The relationship of a police officer and his commander is only a weak example of the relationship every person needs to have with God, the Supreme Commander. The faith and confidence that I must have in my superiors is just a small sample of the faith and confidence that every Christian must have in Jesus Christ.

What surprises me is that people very often are more committed to their earthly superiors than they are to the Lord. I simply cannot understand this concept.

There are big differences between earthly superiors and our Lord. What have my sergeants and lieutenants done for me? Other than training me and making sure that I get a paycheck every two weeks, they have done nothing for me. Yet they still demand my obedience and respect.

Think of all that God's Son has done—and is doing—for you. Mark 10:45 says, "For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." God loved you so much that He gave His





only begotten Son so that if you believe in him, you will have everlasting life. That's what He has already done.

You can find passage after passage in God's Word that shows how the Son of God is constantly with us and guiding us. John 14:1–3 tells us that Jesus is still working for us: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

Many Christians think that once they've trusted Jesus Christ as Savior, they're free to just sit back and be recipients of God's blessings.

But that thinking is all wrong. Because they have received the greatest blessing—the blessing of God's forgiveness of their sin—they should be totally devoted to respecting and obeying God's commands.

God is to be the recipient of your complete love, respect, and service. Make the Lord Jesus your first priority. Learn all you can from Him, and try to be like Him in your thinking, your actions, and your associations. His training will make all the difference in your life.

MY COMMANDER IN CHIEF

1. God is personal.
He wants people to know Him.
He has revealed Himself through _____, _____, and _____.
He is three persons: _____, _____, _____.
2. God is _____.
3. God is active.
 - a. God is _____.
 - b. God is _____.
 - c. God is _____.
 - d. God is _____.
 - e. God is _____.
4. God is _____.
5. God is _____.
6. God is _____.
7. God is _____.
8. God is _____.
9. God is _____.

Use the references on the inside of each flap to fill in the blanks to the right. Be sure your answers correspond with the number on the outside of the flap.