

**BIBLE  
STUDIES  
FOR LIFE®**

**ADULTS**  
**Personal Study Guide**

SUMMER 2023 | NIV

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**STUDY 1:**

*Mentoring:  
Investing in Others*

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**STUDY 2:**

*Set Apart:  
A Life Lived for God*



# THE BEST FREEDOM OF ALL

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We love our freedom! We celebrate our freedom as citizens. When the call has come, we have fought to maintain that freedom. We value freedom as a foundational human right.

But there is one form of freedom we can't obtain: freedom from our sin. It's not enough to "turn over a new leaf" or simply try to be better. Our sin and failure against God hang over us like a huge debt—and it is a debt we are incapable of paying off.

The good news is that Jesus Christ paid that debt for us. He had no sin of His own, yet He willingly took our debt as His own and paid for it on the cross. But that's not all the good news! Jesus also rose from the dead, conquering death. He forgives, removes our sin, and gives us a new, eternal life.

To embrace this gift of forgiveness and eternal life, put your faith in Christ. Admit to God that you are a sinner and ask Him to forgive you of all the wrong things you have done. Turn from the sin that has kept you from God and accept Jesus's gift of forgiveness and new life. Express your repentance and faith by praying a prayer like this:

**“Dear God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus died on the cross to forgive me of my sins. I'm sorry for all the wrong I've done and ask You to forgive me. I now accept Your gift of eternal life. Thank You for forgiveness and for new life in Jesus Christ. From this day forward, I choose to follow You. In Jesus's name, Amen.”**

Share your decision to follow Jesus with a pastor or those in your Bible study group. Be baptized as an expression of your faith. Get involved in a church that will help you grow in your faith.

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R. Brian Gass  
Content Editor

Ken Braddy  
Director of Sunday School

Brian Daniel  
Director, Adult Ministry

Dwayne McCrary  
Manager

Send questions/comments to: Content Editor by email at [brian.gass@lifeway.com](mailto:brian.gass@lifeway.com); mail to Content Editor for Bible Studies for Life: Adults, 200 Powell Place, Suite 100, Brentwood, TN 37027-7707; or make comments on the web at [BibleStudiesforLife.com](https://BibleStudiesforLife.com).

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# WELCOME

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The days are getting warmer, and summer is upon us. For many of us that means a break from the normal slate of activities that consume our time during the rest of the year. Whatever breaks your summer provides, one thing that does not need a break is your need to grow in Christ. Discipleship is a year-round need in all our lives. For that reason, I'm glad you're taking the time for Bible study this summer.


Mentoring is a part of that discipleship process. In the study "Mentoring: Investing in Others," Dr. Sam Crouch shows us six mentoring relationships in Scripture. In this study, we will see how we can let others speak into our lives and how we can, in turn, disciple others.

Holiness is a key term in the Christian life, but what exactly does that mean on a personal and practical level? In the study "Set Apart: A Life Lived for God," Dr. Freddy Cardoza walks us through the significance and beauty of holiness, and how we can live it out on a daily basis.

Two rich studies to make this a memorable summer. Thank you for letting us be a part of your Bible study!

**Lynn H. Pryor**

Team Leader, *Bible Studies for Life*

 @lynnpryor







# PRAYER REQUESTS

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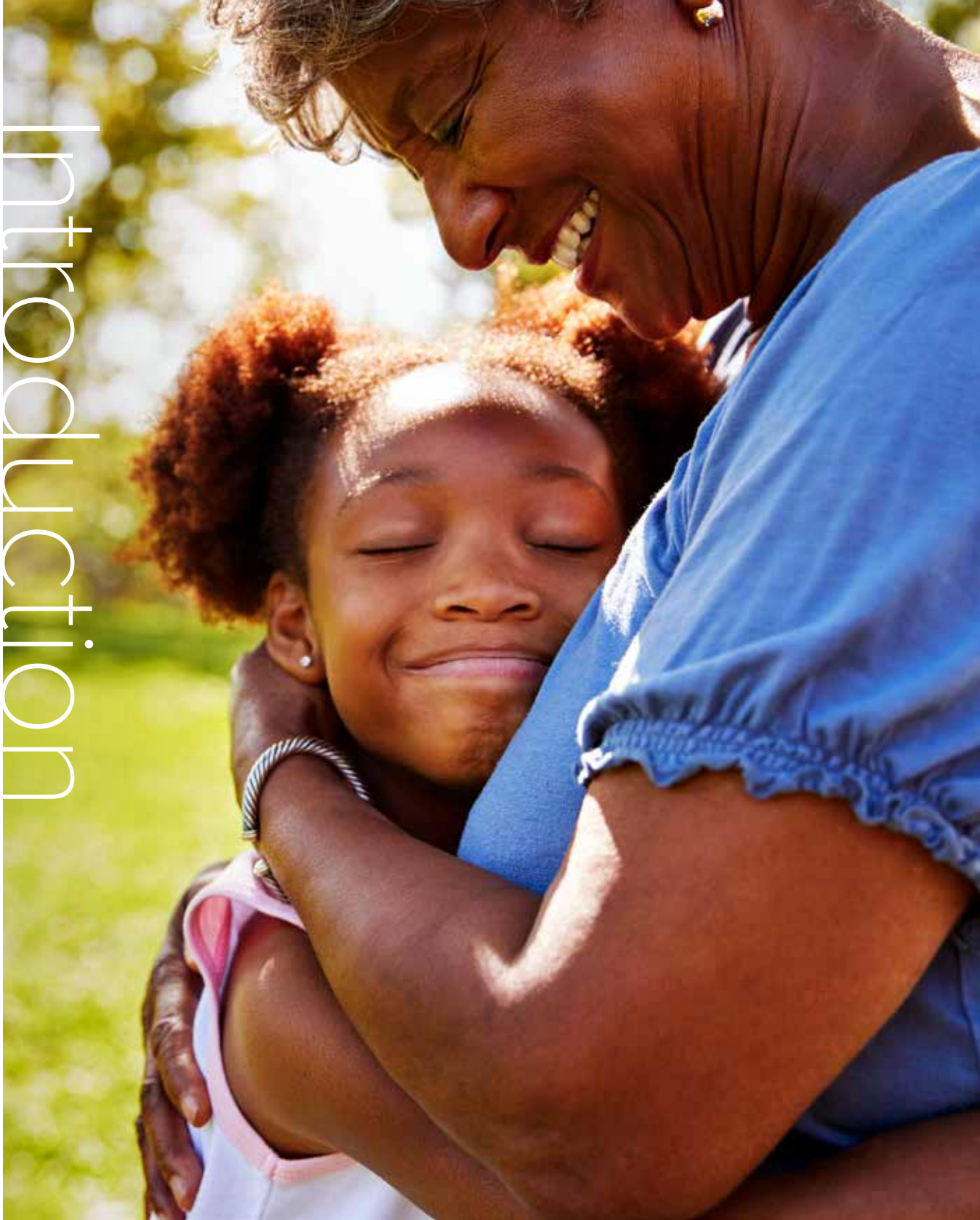
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# Introduction



## MENTORING: INVESTING IN OTHERS

One of the most important words in the English language is the word “relationships.” All of life is about relationships: our relationships to God and our relationships with others. We were created for a relationship with God, but we also are created to be in relationship with each other. Nothing in life is more critical than that.

Every follower of Christ is called on to mentor or disciple others, helping them grow in wisdom and maturity. Mentoring occurs in any number of contexts—within the family, the church, the workplace, the school setting, and anyplace we meet with others. This six-session study focuses on six different mentoring relationships seen in the Bible, challenging us to get involved in helping others develop their spiritual walk. We will discover valuable principles to guide us as we invest time and energy in the lives of others.

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### SAM CROUCH

Sam is retired from fifty-two years in ministry. He lives with his wife in Tucson, Arizona. Dr. Crouch is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His latest book is *Clearing the Fog: Gaining an Understanding and Appreciation of the Old Testament*.

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How “Mentoring: Investing in Others” supports the Discipleship Plan (see page 129):

**Build Relationships.** We strengthen our relationships as we help one another walk wisely and in step with Christ. As the body of Christ, we are to support one another in being the men and women of God we’re called to be.

### **Mentoring: Investing in Others**

Session 1	<b>Jethro and Moses</b> Exodus 18:9-11,14-21
Session 2	<b>Moses and Joshua</b> Numbers 27:12-23
Session 3	<b>Eli and Samuel</b> 1 Samuel 2:22-26; 3:7-10,15-18
Session 4	<b>Mordecai and Esther</b> Esther 2:5-7; 4:8-17
Session 5	<b>Barnabas and Paul</b> Acts 9:26-28; 11:22-26; 15:36-40
Session 6	<b>Paul and Timothy</b> Acts 16:1-5; 2 Timothy 2:1-2; 3:10-12

# 1

## Jethro and Moses



**QUESTION 1:**

*What's something you've learned the hard way?*

## THE POINT

Be ready to give and receive godly wisdom.



## THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

We have a choice: we can learn from experiences, or we can learn from the experiences of others. Learning by our own experiences can often be painful, frustrating, and time consuming. Learning from others shortens the time frame and lessens the pain and frustration. A wise person allows others to go through the stress and learns from their experiences.

We need three types of people in our lives.

**1. Friends.** Those who walk alongside us whom we can mutually support and encourage.

**2. Mentors.** Those we learn from as they share wisdom and life lessons. They challenge us to grow and fulfill our potential.

**3. Those we mentor.** Each of us ought to be mentoring others, someone with whom we can share our experiences. Everyone can profit from the wisdom and experiences of others, and we can share those things with others.

Today's session looks at a brief incident of mentoring in the life of Moses. Without the mentoring that took place, Moses's life could have been quite different.

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

## EXODUS 18:9-11

**<sup>9</sup> Jethro was delighted to hear about all the good things the LORD had done for Israel in rescuing them from the hand of the Egyptians. <sup>10</sup> He said, “Praise be to the LORD, who rescued you from the hand of the Egyptians and of Pharaoh, and who rescued the people from the hand of the Egyptians. <sup>11</sup> Now I know that the LORD is greater than all other gods, for he did this to those who had treated Israel arrogantly.”**

Moses, the great Israelite leader of the exodus out of Egypt, profited from a mentoring relationship with his father-in-law, Jethro, in the early years of the journey out of Egypt. We read about Moses first meeting Jethro (also called Reuel) in Exodus 2:16-21. After fleeing from the pharaoh in Egypt, Moses met Jethro in the land of Midian. Subsequently, Moses married one of Jethro's daughters, Zipporah. For the next forty years, Moses tended the flocks of Jethro in the wilderness area of Midian.

After Moses encountered God at the burning bush (3:2), he decided to return to Egypt with his wife and family. At some point, either during that journey back to Egypt or after arriving in Egypt, Moses sent Zipporah and his two sons back to Jethro (18:2). The reason

for this move remains a mystery, but perhaps Moses did it to protect them from the wrath of Pharaoh during those months before the exodus event began.

When we come to Exodus 18, Moses and the children of Israel had seen the plagues in Egypt and experienced the miraculous crossing of the Red Sea, water from the rock, and quail and manna in the wilderness. Now they were camped at Rephidim, a short distance from Mount Sinai, where the people would soon encounter God. It is at Rephidim that Jethro caught up with Moses to deliver Zipporah and her two sons to Moses.

### QUESTION 2:

***What are some benefits of acknowledging God's work?***

Jethro is identified as the “priest of Midian” (v. 1). While no mention is made at this point concerning the particular god he represented, in verse 11 Jethro declared, “Now I know that the LORD is greater than all other gods.” Hearing of all the ways God had acted on behalf of His people, Jethro acknowledged the greatness of Yahweh, and he sacrificed a burnt offering to God. A great meal was held in God’s presence that included Jethro, Moses, Aaron, and the elders of the tribes of Israel (v. 12). In this way, Jethro led the leaders of Israel in a joyous celebration of all that

God had done for the nation to this point in time. Thus began a brief, yet critical, period of mentoring between Jethro and Moses.

The relationship of mentoring between Jethro and Moses was brief; yet, it was extremely profitable for Moses. Following the initial worship celebration of all God was doing for the children of Israel, Jethro would spend a few more days in the camp. During this time, he began to observe some things that disturbed him greatly.

## EXODUS 18:14-18

**<sup>14</sup> When his father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he said, “What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?” <sup>15</sup> Moses answered him, “Because the people come to me to seek God’s will. <sup>16</sup> Whenever they have a dispute, it is brought to me, and I decide between the parties and inform them of God’s decrees and instructions.” <sup>17</sup> Moses’ father-in-law replied, “What you are doing is not good. <sup>18</sup> You and these people who come to you will only wear yourselves out. The work is too heavy for you; you cannot handle it alone.”**





Difficulties in relationships happen. We are sinful people, and disagreements and disputes will occur. Such was the case among the children of Israel as they made their way from Egypt to the land God had promised them. When you consider the nation was comprised of thousands of families, you get an idea of the challenge facing Moses. He found himself spending his entire day “decid[ing] between the parties.”

Through observation, Jethro discerned the difficult position that both Moses and the people were in. The people would stand all day waiting for their turn to speak with Moses, who, for his part, was occupied continually in these menial matters when, most likely, there were many more pressing matters to which he should have been attending. After all, Moses’s job was to shape this ragtag mob of former slaves into an organized nation that followed God.

Jethro offered a good approach to mentoring when he turned his observations into questions. “What is this you are doing for the people? Why do you alone sit as judge, while all these people stand around you from morning till evening?” Jethro wanted to hear from Moses’s lips an explanation for this overwhelming situation. The questions he asked may have helped Jethro understand the situation and may very well have proved to be eye-opening for Moses. Jethro’s inquiry may have proved to Moses the gravity of the situation. This is seen in the words of Jethro: “What you are doing is not good.”

This is the work of anyone serving as a mentor. Through observations and questions, mentors can lead those being helped to come to their own understanding of the situation. Once they reach the point of seeing the problems or challenges, they are ready for further guidance in how to address the situation, but they first must be able to see the problem and articulate it.

**QUESTION 3:**

***What’s the difference between constructive criticism and just being critical?***



## EXODUS 18:19-21

<sup>19</sup> “Listen now to me and I will give you some advice, and may God be with you. You must be the people’s representative before God and bring their disputes to him. <sup>20</sup> Teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave. <sup>21</sup> But select capable men from all the people—men who fear God, trustworthy men who hate dishonest gain—and appoint them as officials over thousands, hundreds, fifties and tens.”

Only after observing and listening to Moses did Jethro offer his advice. Jethro acknowledged the two functions identified by Moses in verse 16: (1) Moses represented the people before God and brought their cases to God; and (2) Moses was God’s representative before the people, teaching them the ways of God. These were certainly important tasks, but Moses didn’t have to go it alone.

### QUESTION 4:

***What role does our group play in helping one another receive sound advice?***

Jethro said Moses’s essential task was being a representative between God and the people of Israel. In this role, Moses was to “teach them his decrees and instructions, and show them the way they are to live and how they are to behave.”

Jethro next turned to the task that was consuming Moses’s time and keeping him from giving full attention to instructing and teaching the people: serving as a judge

and mediator in the disagreements that had arisen. It was here that Jethro highlighted the greatest weakness in Moses’s approach to leadership, for his current approach would wear out both Moses and the people.

Jethro advised his son-in-law to divide the duty between capable men who could take this burden from Moses. These men were to be characterized by some essential traits. They were to be competent people with a firm trust in God. In addition, they were to be honest and not greedy for gain.

In any mentoring relationship, a major goal should include teaching concerning God and His ways. Mentors should lead others to understand the “way to live” that will please and honor God. Also, a good mentoring relationship should focus on not simply identifying problems, but on discovering solutions.

### QUESTION 5:

***What can we learn from the relationship between Jethro and Moses?***

## RECEIVING COUNSEL

*Moses's father-in-law gave Moses some unsolicited advice.  
Who has the right to do that in your life? Cross out those who don't.  
Put a star next to the person you would listen to the most:*

<b>Parent</b>	<b>Sibling</b>	<b>Therapist</b>	<b>Spouse</b>
<b>Adult children</b>	<b>In-laws</b>	<b>Pastor</b>	<b>Group leader</b>
<b>Friends</b>	<b>Social media influencer</b>	<b>Best-selling author</b>	
<b>Other:</b> _____			

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*“Not until we have become humble and teachable, standing in awe of God’s holiness and sovereignty . . . acknowledging our own littleness, distrusting our own thoughts, and willing to have our minds turned upside down, can divine wisdom become ours.”*

J. I. PACKER

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# LIVE IT OUT

We should be ready to give and receive godly wisdom.  
Choose one of the following applications:

- ▶ **Pray.** Over the next week, pray each day that God would either lay on your heart someone you want to learn from or someone you could help.
- ▶ **Seek.** Intentionally search out someone who could serve as a mentor to you. Ask this person to prayerfully consider walking alongside you and helping you grow.
- ▶ **Invest.** Choose to mentor someone else. Ask someone if he or she would be willing to walk alongside you and allow you to speak into his or her life (this should be someone of the same gender).

No one likes to learn lessons the hard way. It's much better to find someone who's been down the road you plan to take and learn from their wisdom. God places these individuals in our lives for a reason!