

# Gentle and Lowly Study Guide For Biblical Counseling

Written by Wendy Wood (also using some of the Dane Ortlund study questions)

1. What we think about God determines every aspect of life. If we have an incorrect or incomplete view of God, it affects our thoughts, emotions, desires, and our responses to everything. God reveals Himself in scripture. We certainly don't know all about God, but what he has revealed, we must study and help our counselees study.
2. Our hearts naturally turn to moralism. It is easy to view the bible and God as a set of rules to follow. We must fight this religious mentality and continually seek a deeper relationship with God. We are reconciled to God for relationship and we must put effort to know God intimately.
3. People can be scared of grace - maybe especially reformed theology people! But it is God's kindness that leads to repentance. We need to see the true nature of God. Grace and love are not excuses to be easy on sin, but should compel us deeper faith and trust and obedience.
4. Only a greater love for God can "out love" our idols and sinful habits. Creating a deep and abiding love in God comes through knowing his essence.
5. We are compelled to Christlikeness as we "behold" Christ. We see his heart in this book in a way that "as we behold his compassion, his mercy, his slow to anger character, we can be transformed from one degree of glory to the next.

## Chapter 1

1. How does this challenge your current view of Jesus?
2. Where in your life to do act or respond like Jesus is trigger-happy or that you need to clean up your burdens before you come to him?
3. How does seeing Jesus as gentle and lowly encourage you to come to Christ with sin and concerns?

## Chapter 2

1. How are you experiencing Jesus' love and compassion right now in your daily life?

2. How have you responded like Jesus would recoil from your sin?
3. How does Jesus moving toward you even in your sin change the way you approach him?
4. How does Jesus' compassion change your view of your own sin?

### Chapter 3

1. If Christ's own joy, comfort, happiness, and glory are increased by his showing mercy and grace, how do you fight against using that as license to sin?
2. How have you acted like it is a burden for Jesus to forgive you?
3. How can you love Jesus' mercy and not presume on it?
4. Why are some people scared to celebrate Jesus' mercy? What is the danger of not celebrating his mercy?

### Chapter 4

1. When have you felt isolated in suffering? How does this truth about Jesus challenge you to think differently?
2. What can you do in suffering to show you trust Jesus as a "co-sufferer"?

### Chapter 5

1. Do you put yourself into the wayward or ignorant category? Why? When are you actually both of these?
2. Do you tend to look at your sin more, or Christ?

3. How can you focus on Christ more?

## Chapter 6

1. Can you think of a time you felt “cast out”?
2. What makes it hard to believe you will never be cast out?
3. Why can Christ hold you fast? What has happened that makes this truth absolutely sure?

## Chapter 7

1. Define grace based on this chapter.
2. How is this different from how you have thought of grace in the past?
3. How does Christ’s holiness affect the way he sees sin and how he responds to it?
4. How is discipline the love of Christ?

## Chapter 8

1. Is there something about which you doubt that you are forgiven?
2. What difference to you and your prayer life does it make that Jesus is always praying for you?
3. What’s the connection between his intercession and his heart?

4. Write out how you think and feel about Jesus always interceding for you?

5. Put into your own words what it means that Jesus saves to the uttermost?

## Chapter 9

1. Describe the difference between an advocate and an intercessor.

2. What does Jesus' advocacy mean when you are tempted to blame shift? What about when you want to justify your actions?

3. What does Jesus' advocacy mean when you are tempted to parade your goodness in front of others?

4. How do you practically leave your case for Christ to make before his Father?

## Chapter 10

1. Write out at least 6 things that Christ's heart does for us as his children.

2. Dane Ortlund says "romance Christ". Spend time pondering Jesus' heart. Spend time sitting still before God and thinking about his gentle, lowly heart that is compassionate, faithful, your intercessor and advocate, that he saves to the uttermost. Each day for the next 10 days, sit still and "romance Christ" in this way.

## Chapter 11

1. Describe God's emotional life.
2. How does Jesus' compassion and anger rise and fall together?
3. What does it mean that "love does not remain indifferent"?
4. How does Jesus' emotional life encourage those who have been sinned against in a grievous way?

## Chapter 12

1. What does it mean to consider Christ your friend? How should this impact your life?
2. How is Jesus better than any friend on earth?
3. When is it difficult for you to view Jesus as the best friend ever?
4. How can you pursue Christ more?

## Chapter 13

1. What roles does the Holy Spirit play in a believer's life?
2. Dane Ortlund says the Spirit turns a recipe into taste and makes Christ personal. How have you experienced this in your life?

## Chapter 14

1. Have you viewed God the Father as less compassionate than God the Son? Where does this idea come from and what evidence in the bible shows that the Father and Son are the same in nature?
2. What would change in your life and circumstances if you really trusted that God multiplies mercies for every need?
3. God's comfort comes in different forms but is the physical strength to carry on in stressful situations. God provides emotional strength to trust Him in trials. God's comfort can help us think clearly in difficulty and provides the ability to continue to produce spiritual fruit even in hard times. When have you experienced God's comfort?

## Chapter 15

1. Why does God bring affliction into the lives of His children?
2. Why does the author say God's heart "is conflicted" when He sends afflictions into our lives?
3. What is God's disposition? When God is "caught off guard" (which could never happen because He is omniscient and sovereign), what leaps out of Him?
4. What evidence do you see in your responses to situations that shows you trust this about God? What evidence is there that you don't fully trust God in this and that you need to grow in these areas?

## Chapter 16

1. What is God's glory as He revealed to Moses?
2. What is covenantal love? How do you experience this?
3. How is God holy and good in not clearing the guilty?
4. Respond to Dane Ortlund's statement that God doesn't have His finger on the trigger and that His anger must be provoked.
5. Are you thankful for God's wrath? Why or why not?

## Chapter 17

1. What is the context of Isaiah 55:8 that says, "My thoughts are not your thoughts".
2. How have you made God 'small' and thought of His compassion and willingness to pardon sins like yourself or another human?
3. Dane Ortlund says, "He isn't like you". God is totally separate. List 5 ways that God is completely "other" and why you are thankful for those qualities.

4. How does your heart tend toward law-ishness?

## Chapter 18

1. Whom do you perceive God to be in your sin and your suffering?
2. Who do you think God is - not just on paper but in the kind of person you believe is hearing you when you pray?
3. Are you reluctant to let God love you?

## Chapter 19

1. Do you see your salvation as a resurrection from death to life or that you just needed a little change?
2. What is the proof of God's mercy in your life even when you face challenges and suffering?
3. What in your life shows you trust God's mercy?
4. Do you respond to your sin by trusting God's mercy or by trying harder in yourself?



5. Do you respond to suffering trusting God's mercy or complaining and struggling to end the suffering at all cost?

## Chapter 20

1. Where in your life do you see a spirit of law?
2. Galatians 3:10 says that all who rely on works of the law are under a curse. Are you "of works"? Not what you believe doctrinally, but how you really function in life. What are some examples of living by a works-based mentality?
3. How does Christ's work both on the cross and now as He is ascended in heaven, address your "of works-ness"?

## Chapter 21

1. Do you live like God is disappointed in you?
2. How would you re-write Romans 5:6-11 in your own logic?
3. How does Romans 5:6-11 apply to your on-going life as a disciple?
4. Do you live like you are secure in Christ? How?

## Chapter 22

1. How is God's love different from love you give and receive from humans?
2. Put into your own words what God and Christ went through as Christ suffered on the cross.
3. Why does Warfield say "Jesus died of a broken heart"?
4. He loved his own to the very end. What does that mean to you?
5. Spend some time meditating on what Christ endured on the cross.
6. How would your view of Christ change if you spent time thinking about what your sin really deserves?

## Chapter 23

1. On page 207, 208, Dane Ortlund says "God made the world so His Son's heart had an outlet" and "the creation of the world was to give vent to the gracious heart of Christ". What does this mean to you?
2. From Ephesians 2:7 meditate on the words "immeasurable", "riches", and "kindness".

3. What are some fears or anxieties in your life that do not loom as large in light of these eternal realities just around the corner for those of us in Christ?
  
4. What hope do you find from thinking about the age to come?

End of the Book:

Write 5 sentences that summarize what you have learned about Christ.

How do you want your thoughts to change based on what you have learned?

How will your responses to your circumstances be different living in light of these truths about Christ and His heart?