



FAITH
for
Real Life
— 50 —
BIBLE STUDIES
— FOR WOMEN —
IN CHRISTIAN ADULT EDUCATION
— ♥ —

BIBLE STUDIES FOR GROWTH, PURPOSE,
AND HOPE IN EVERY SEASON OF LIFE



TRUTH
THAT GUIDES



STRENGTH
THAT BUILDS



HOPE
THAT GROWS



FAITH
THAT SUSTAINS



A FUTURE
THAT FLOURISHES

— FAITH. GROWTH. HOPE. —

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FAITH FOR REAL LIFE

50 Bible Studies for Women in Christian Adult Education

Instructor Guide with Participant Handouts

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LESSON 1 — You Are Seen

Key Scripture: Genesis 16:1–16

Main Truth: God sees you, knows what you are facing, and cares about your life.

Purpose of the Lesson

Help participants connect the Bible passage with real life, identify one practical response, and see another part of the hope God offers through Jesus Christ. This expanded lesson develops that purpose by giving the instructor enough material to teach the Scripture, connect it with ordinary life, and help participants practice the main truth: God sees you, knows what you are facing, and cares about your life.

Before You Teach

This lesson may touch loneliness, abandonment, family conflict, pregnancy, homelessness, or feeling unwanted. Never pressure anyone to tell a personal story. Many adults entering Christian education have lived through interrupted schooling, unstable relationships, repeated financial strain, or years of being defined by what they lack. A strength-based approach does not ignore those realities. It recognizes that survival itself often required problem-solving, endurance, caregiving, and adaptability that can become building blocks for growth. Listen for assumptions that may unintentionally shame participants. Whenever possible, distinguish between a person and a problem, between a circumstance and an identity, and between offering help and taking over responsibility that belongs to the learner.

Getting Started

Begin with this question: **Have you ever been in a crowded place and still felt completely alone?** Give the group a moment to think before anyone answers. Some participants will respond quickly; others may need silence before they decide whether they want to speak. The opening is meant to create recognition, not force personal disclosure.

A Real-Life Story

Maria's Tuesday

Maria sat in her car for several minutes before going inside her evening class. She was thirty-four, raising two children, working at a nursing home, and studying for her high school equivalency test. That Tuesday her supervisor had corrected her in front of another employee, her son's teacher had called, and there was less than twenty dollars in her checking account. A family member had also called needing help, as though Maria were the person who always had everything together. She rested her head against the steering wheel and thought, 'Does anybody know how hard I am trying?' Then she wiped her eyes, picked up her notebook, and went to class. Everyone saw Maria walk through the door. Nobody knew what she had carried through it.

From the outside, the moment might not look important enough to change anything, yet this is often how pressure works. A mother holding several responsibilities while no one knows how close she is to giving up can quietly shape what a woman believes about herself and what she expects will happen next. The story becomes useful when the class looks beneath the event and notices the thought, fear, or assumption underneath it.

After reading the story, ask what part of the situation is a circumstance and what part is an interpretation. The circumstances surrounding a student who smiles in class after a day of criticism, money pressure, and family demands may be real, but the conclusion a person draws from them may still need to be tested. This prepares the group to hear Scripture as truth that speaks into the meaning of the situation, not merely as a verse added to the end of a story.

Open the Bible

Hagar was an Egyptian servant in Abram and Sarai's household. After Sarai arranged for Hagar to bear Abram a child, the relationships in the home became painful and complicated. Hagar eventually fled into the wilderness while pregnant and uncertain about her future. Genesis 16 says the angel of the Lord found her near a spring. She had left the household, but she had not left God's sight. Read the passage slowly enough for participants to notice the people, the tension, and the response of God. The goal is not to pull out a slogan, but to see how the truth of the passage speaks into a real human situation. After the reading, ask one simple observation question before teaching: "What do you notice?" This allows participants with little Bible background to enter the passage through what is actually on the page rather than feeling they must already know the right religious answer.

Teaching Point 1: God notices people others overlook

Hagar was not the powerful person in the story. She was a servant, a foreigner, and a woman in distress. Yet God addressed her personally. A woman may feel that people see only her job, her mistakes, her needs, or her responsibilities. Scripture shows a God who sees the person beneath the circumstance.

In ordinary life, this principle becomes important because people often make a broad conclusion from one painful experience. Consider a mother holding several responsibilities while no one knows how close she is to giving up. The wiser response is to name what is actually happening, separate fact from fear or shame, and choose the next action that agrees with the truth of the lesson.

The aim is not to make the difficulty sound small. It is to show that the difficulty does not have to make every decision. Scripture gives participants a steadier place from which to think, ask for help, and act.

Teaching Point 2: God knows the whole story

Hagar did not have to explain every detail before God understood. We do not have to pretend with God either. We can bring Him fear, anger, disappointment, confusion, and questions. Honest prayer is not disrespectful when it is offered to the God who already knows the truth.

This teaching point becomes practical when it reaches the decisions people make on an ordinary day. Consider a student who smiles in class after a day of criticism, money pressure, and family demands. A participant may not be able to change every circumstance, but she can learn to recognize what belongs to her, what help is appropriate, and what faithful action is available now.

This is also a place to recognize progress that might otherwise be missed. A healthier sentence, one appropriate boundary, one completed form, one honest conversation, or one week of a new routine can be meaningful evidence that change is beginning.

Teaching Point 3: Being seen does not mean life is easy

Hagar still had difficult decisions ahead. God did not promise that every problem would disappear immediately. The change was that Hagar no longer faced her future believing she was unseen. God's presence gives courage for the next wise step even when circumstances remain complicated.

Many women will understand this point before they have language for it. It can appear in situations such as a woman who assumes needing help means she has become a burden. The instructor can help the group move from a vague feeling to a clearer principle, because clarity often makes a wise next step easier to see.

Avoid reducing this to a motivational statement. The biblical truth has enough strength to hold both dignity and responsibility. Growth may be gradual, and a wise response may include practice, boundaries, repentance, support, or patience.

A Real-Life Connection

Return to Maria's Tuesday and imagine what a wise next step might look like after the lesson. The goal is not to solve the woman's entire life in one conversation. It is to help her see the situation more clearly. In real life, the same principle may appear in a mother holding several responsibilities while no one knows how close she is to giving up, a student who smiles in class after a day of criticism, money pressure, and family demands, or a woman who assumes needing help means she has become a burden. A useful question is, "What part of this situation is mine to address now, and what support would make that step more realistic?" This keeps the application practical. Christian hope should strengthen responsible action rather than replace it.

What This Does Not Mean

Being seen by God does not mean a woman should remain in danger, ignore practical needs, or refuse qualified help. God often cares for people through wise decisions, safe relationships, churches, ministries, and community resources. Say this clearly when the subject could be misunderstood. Good teaching protects participants from turning a helpful biblical truth into a simplistic rule that ignores safety, responsibility, individual circumstances, or appropriate professional care.

Hope in Christ

Jesus later showed this same heart again and again. He noticed people others passed by, spoke with people others dismissed, and moved toward hurting people rather than away from them. A participant who does not yet know Christ can begin with a simple question: What would it mean if God really does see me? Christianity begins not with pretending life is fine, but with discovering the God who comes near.

For a woman who is still exploring Christianity, do not rush past the question this raises about Jesus. Invite her to look at His character and actions. She does not need to pretend certainty or repeat language she does not yet understand; she can begin by asking whether the Christ described in Scripture is trustworthy.

Keep the connection to Christ natural and specific. The instructor is not trying to force a spiritual moment; she is helping participants see that the character and work of Jesus belong in the middle of real life, not only in a church service.

Talk About It

1. What pressures was Maria carrying?
2. Why do people sometimes feel invisible even when they are surrounded by others?
3. What stands out to you about God finding Hagar in the wilderness?
4. What is the difference between people knowing about us and God knowing the whole story?
5. How could knowing “God sees me” change the way someone faces a difficult week?
6. What is one wise step a person can take when she feels overwhelmed?
7. What might make it hard for someone to believe that God sees her?
8. What is the difference between being helped and being treated as helpless?

The instructor does not need to use every question. Choose those that fit the group, the available time, and the level of trust in the room. Participants should always have permission to pass on a question that feels too personal.

Putting It Into Practice

- Complete: “God sees me when _____.”

- Name one situation you can talk honestly with God about.
- Identify one practical step you can take this week rather than trying to solve everything at once.

Give participants several quiet minutes to work privately. The exercise is not a test, and no one should be required to read an answer aloud. Encourage one specific response rather than a long list of intentions.

If participants need an example, use a neutral situation such as a student who smiles in class after a day of criticism, money pressure, and family demands. Ask them to separate what they can control, what they may need help with, and what one action could be completed before the next class.

Instructor Insight

If someone shares a painful experience, do not immediately try to fix it. Thank her for trusting the group, acknowledge the difficulty, and return gently to the truth of the passage. Follow your ministry's safety procedures if anyone reveals current danger. When a participant responds strongly, slow the conversation rather than rushing to fix it. A useful first response is to acknowledge what you heard and ask whether she wants practical help, prayer, or simply a few minutes to think. Many adults entering Christian education have lived through interrupted schooling, unstable relationships, repeated financial strain, or years of being defined by what they lack. Keep your role clear. Instructors can teach, listen, encourage, and connect participants with appropriate resources; they should not attempt to function as attorneys, physicians, counselors, or crisis professionals unless they hold those qualifications and are serving in that role.

Optional Class Illustration or Activity

Place a closed tote bag on a table and ask whether anyone can know how heavy it is simply by looking at it. Use the bag to remind the group that we often see a person without knowing what she is carrying.

Keep the activity brief and return to the Scripture afterward. The activity is useful only if it clarifies the lesson; it should never become the point of the class.

Closing Thought

There may be times when people do not understand what you are carrying. You are not invisible to God. He sees where you are, knows your story, and can meet you there. The central truth to carry out of the room is this: God sees you, knows what you are facing, and cares about your life. Participants may still have unanswered questions or unfinished circumstances, and that is acceptable. A faithful next step can be meaningful even when the whole road is not yet visible.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You that You see us. You know the things we talk about and the things we keep inside. Give us wisdom for our decisions, courage for what we must face, and a growing understanding of who You are. Help us carry the truth of this lesson into the choices we make this week. In Jesus' name, amen.

PARTICIPANT HANDOUT — LESSON 1

You Are Seen

Scripture: Genesis 16:1–16

Today's Truth: God sees you, knows what you are facing, and cares about your life.

Think About It

1. What am I carrying right now that I most need to bring honestly to God?

2. What is one truth from today's Scripture that I want to remember?

3. What is one part of this situation that is within my responsibility or control?

4. What is one wise, realistic step I can take this week?

What I Am Learning

Something I learned about God or Jesus:

One question I still have:

Remember

God sees you, knows what you are facing, and cares about your life.