

As a women's ministry leader, I struggle to find devotionals that are grounded in Scripture and pose insightful questions encouraging spiritual growth. Thankfully, *In the Waiting: Drawing Near to God in Seasons of Wanting*, does both! If you feel stuck in a season of waiting, join Jazmin on a journey through God's Word, where you'll discover how to refocus your heart and meet God in the waiting.

— CYNDEE OWNBEY, Author of *Rethinking Women's Ministry* and
founder of Women's Ministry Toolbox

I have enjoyed Jazmin's writing for many years and this devotional reflects her faithful study and diligent application of God's Word. We all struggle with seasons of waiting, yet the Bible is filled with stories of God at work in the waiting. I am confident that you will be encouraged by this study of biblical characters, who were ministered to by God, as they learned to trust Him even when the blessing, or promise, was delayed. Forty days from now, you will have a fresh perspective and renewed hope that our God can use seasons of waiting in our life and circumstance for His glory.

— SARAH KOONTZ, Bible Study Author and
founder of Living by Designs Ministries

Jazmin Frank does more than simply bridge the head and the heart in this bold daily devotional. She empowers the reader to become a more whole person, which God created them to be. She doesn't pull any punches and she doesn't leave you feeling alone. This specific topic of waiting is one of the biggest spiritual needs in America today.

— JACOB JUNKER, friend

Do you feel stuck and frustrated in your season of waiting? Jazmin Frank offers hope in the waiting. Through brief devotions that touch on many Bible stories, you'll find affirmation and practical tips to help you wait with greater faith.

— SARAH GERINGER, speaker, blogger and author of
Transforming Your Thought Life: Christian Meditation in Focus

Most of us are familiar with the struggle of wanting something to happen while waiting for God's plan to unfold. This gap between what is and what will be is the focus of *In the Waiting*. In this study, Jazmin explores how we can be active in the present as we hope for the future by examining the stories of beloved Biblical characters. Through their lives we are reminded of God's providence and challenged to trust Him no matter the timetable or answer He gives. Thank you Jazmin for extending the permission to want, but ultimately encouraging us to want Him most of all.

— RACHAEL ADAMS, host of the Love Offering Podcast

In the Waiting is insightful, creative, and deeply profound. There is a lot of waiting in the Bible. God makes many magnificent promises which often are fulfilled only after long years, even generations, of waiting. This study enters the stories of Biblical characters as they waited; sometimes in anticipation and joy, but sometimes also in suffering, confusion, and doubt. Jazmin weaves an informed, thoughtful, and reflective reading of each story, which leads the reader on a journey to ponder questions such as “What am I waiting for?” “How should I wait?” and “Where is God while I wait?” As you read this book, have your Bible open and your heart prepared to encounter God. He is with you even as you wait.

— MICHAEL SCHWIND, seminary student

This book is such a great guide through times of waiting. Jazmin points you towards Christ every step of the way. It has been so crucial to me in my own time of waiting!

— EVA KUBASIAK, creator of the *Deep Dive Journal*

In the Waiting

DRAWING NEAR TO GOD IN
SEASONS OF WANTING

JAZMIN N. FRANK



Beautifully Devoted
— RESOURCES —



Beautifully Devoted

R E S O U R C E S

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*For the waiting ones. For those who want and don't yet have.
Those trusting the Lord for something they can't see. God is near.
He is right here. Present in your waiting. May these pages help
you press all the deeper into relationship with Him.*



Get access to companion teaching videos for small groups or individual study and other bonuses at jazminnfrank.com/waiting.

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A Note from the Author

Introduction

Some stories take longer to tell.

Wander around any library or bookstore and you'll see books of all sizes and lengths. Some stories are straightforward while others contain so many twists and turns that it takes pages upon pages—and sometimes even multiple books—to resolve everything.

That fact is not only true in the book world, but it is also true in our lives. There are some things that come about quickly and easily without much struggle. Then there are those other things that take time. Lots of time. Often it feels like too much time.

We call those the waiting seasons, and if you're like me, you are not a fan of waiting.

But what if I told you that waiting is actually a good thing? What if these seasons are actually opportunities?

If you just rolled your eyes or felt that little fire of anger flicker in your gut, stick with me. I know how hard it is to hear that waiting is a good thing when your heart feels torn in two from an unanswered longing. I'm not here to tell you that waiting is good because it helps build character or patience or something like that, though it definitely can. I'm saying that waiting is meant to be something good and holy, another avenue to build relationship with God even in times when everything around us looks barren and empty.

This study is all about flipping waiting on its head. Over the next forty days we're going to dig into stories in Scripture of those who waited and how they met God—or rather, how God met them—in the midst of their wanting. We're going to take a look at their struggle and their faith. We're going to pay attention to their attitudes. We're going to read about people who ran ahead of God, and people who waited faithfully. We're going to eavesdrop on their prayers and listen for God's answers. All with the goal, not of finding a formula to end our waiting, but to encounter the God who is with us in the waiting. Hopefully by the end of it, *wait* won't be a word that we despise. Instead, we might find that this word becomes an invitation to deeper relationship with God as we abide in Him, trust Him, and anticipate His movement.

I'm not sure what you're waiting for, dear heart. I don't know how long you've been waiting or how you feel about it, but you picked up this book for a reason, whether you chose it or

it was given to you, and I want to ask you to enter into it vulnerably and honestly.

We're probably going to poke at some pain points, but don't run away. Allow yourself to enter into the pain, the disappointment, the bitterness, the resentment, the hopelessness, and invite God to enter into all of that honest emotion with you. Allow Him to minister to your hurting and weary heart. Allow Him to meet you in the waiting. And if I can give you one bit of encouragement before we begin, it's to go back to the statement I started with: Some stories just take time to tell. But often the stories with all the twists, turns, and waiting are the ones with the sweetest resolutions.

Because of the nature of this topic, it might be beneficial to gather a couple of other people to study with. If you're studying with a group, there is a leader guide in the back of this book. Teaching videos are also available to help you dive deeper into this topic of waiting. These videos are useful for both groups and individuals. You can access those videos and other bonus resources by visiting jazminnfrank.com/waiting.

Blessings on the journey, dear heart.

I pray you come out on the other side loving God more, loving His story more, and with a deeper understanding of what it looks like to live devoted to Him even in the waiting.

Live in His love,

>>jazmin

Bible Study Skills

It's my personal goal in each study I create not just to feed you content, but to also teach you skills. Studying the Bible can feel like a daunting task, but anyone can do it. You don't need a degree or special training, just a few handy tools and a heart open to the leading of the Holy Spirit. So before we dive into the actual study, let's talk about a few skills that you can use to dig deep into Scripture, both in this study and in your personal Bible study time:

SKILL #1 ACTIVE READING

You make the move from Bible reading to Bible study when you actively engage in God's Word. This can happen in a lot of different ways like underlining, color coding, marking in the margins, or keeping a journal.

One great way I've found to easily engage in Scripture is to ask questions. I like to say that the Bible is God's way of inviting us into conversation with Him. Rather than passively reading Scripture, we can engage in God's Word by asking questions about what we read and how it applies to our lives.

Each day of this study, before I teach or share anything, I'm going to give you space to engage in God's Word yourself. You'll have the passage of Scripture and a block of space to respond to what you read. You can use this space in whatever way you'd like, but if I can encourage you to stretch your Bible study muscles just a bit, I want to challenge you to use this space to jot down questions and record whatever answers you find or receive from God. My Bible study group has three questions we ask every week. If you don't know what to ask, these three questions are great ones to use:

1. Where is God in this passage?
2. Who does God reveal Himself to be in this passage?
3. How might this passage help me in my own waiting?

These questions provide a great framework to make observations about what you read, pay attention to where God is and what He reveals about Himself, and apply what you read to your life.

SKILL #2 UNDERSTAND THE BIG PICTURE OF SCRIPTURE

Though the Bible is made up of 66 individual books, each book helps tell the overarching story of God. From Genesis to Revelation, God is the main character.

The beauty of this study is that we're not settling in to any particular book of the Bible. We're going to spend time in both the Old and New Testament, popping in and out of people's stories, but all of these stories—though they might seem separate—fit together to tell the greater story of God's plan to restore relationship between humanity and Himself. Studying Scripture gets a little easier when you have a grasp of how all of these stories tie together.

For the most part, this study is organized chronologically. This means the stories of the people we're going to study occur in the order they happened historically. You'll find as we move through these next forty days, some stories will be revisited often. Abraham's waiting, for example, is intimately connected to many other passages of Scripture because Abraham was waiting on God for something that stretched far beyond his own lifetime. Pay attention to how these stories connect. Remember, while we are going to focus on individual people, all of these stories help tell God's story.

SKILL #3 CHARACTER STUDY

A character study is when you take a person and focus on their struggles, their victories, their interactions with God, and how they grow in their faith. That's exactly what we're going to do here. Now you might be wondering, "Why should I spend time studying people's stories in the Bible, if it's really all about God?"

We should spend time studying their stories because we can learn a lot about God by paying attention to how He interacts with people.

We know God through His Word, yes, but not just through what He *says*. We learn a lot about God's character and His heart as we see how He *interacts* with people. By paying attention to those who have gone before us, we can learn from their mistakes, grow from their faith, and encounter God in new ways. We are people who learn from people and we have a lot to learn from the men and women of Scripture. They are no different from us, except that they are several generations removed. The people in Scripture are real with real histories. They had emotions, desires, secrets, scars. They were all humans in need of a Savior just as we are and we can stand to learn something from their experiences, choices, and perspectives.

One last thing to keep in mind as you read is to allow God to lead you. A simple moment of asking God to speak, to be present, will go far in helping you understand what you study and invest in your relationship with Him. So before we begin Day 1, let's pray together.

Lord, we invite you into this space. You have gone before us. You know what these pages hold and how we will encounter You over the next forty days. You know what we are waiting for and how we feel about it. You know what wounds the waiting has caused us. We ask that You would be near. We ask that Your Word would speak healing and hope to our hearts. We ask that we would hear Your voice, encounter Your presence, know You deeper, and love You more than when we began. You are God. You are Lord over our hearts, Lord over our desires, and Lord over the wanting seasons. Help us see You here, Lord. Help us know You better. And help us to desire You above all else.



Day 1: Name Your Wait

Before we dive into studying other people's stories, I want us to spend today looking at your own story. You picked up this study for a reason, most likely because you're in your own season of wanting and waiting. I know waiting seasons can be tender and touchy, but I want to give you some safe space to share your story here.

Don't feel like you have to write a novel. I'll guide you. Just a few words can help you name your wanting. Then on our last day of the study I'll ask you to revisit your story. Maybe by the end of the 40 days you will have seen some movement in your waiting. Maybe something will have changed, or maybe you will find yourself even deeper in the waiting. Whatever your circumstances look like, I hope that when we get to the end of this study you'll notice that something has changed in your heart.

My hope is that through this study you'll learn how to connect with God, that you will value Him not because of what He can give you, but because He gave up everything to have a relationship with you.

Take your time here. Be honest. Use this as your starting point to connect with God.

What are you waiting for?

What is your view of God in the waiting? Do you blame Him? Do you believe He'll come through?

How long have you been waiting? When did the waiting start?

What answers or movement have you experienced in your waiting so far?

What are you hoping to glean from this study?

What verses, words, songs, stories, or images have been encouraging to you in your waiting?

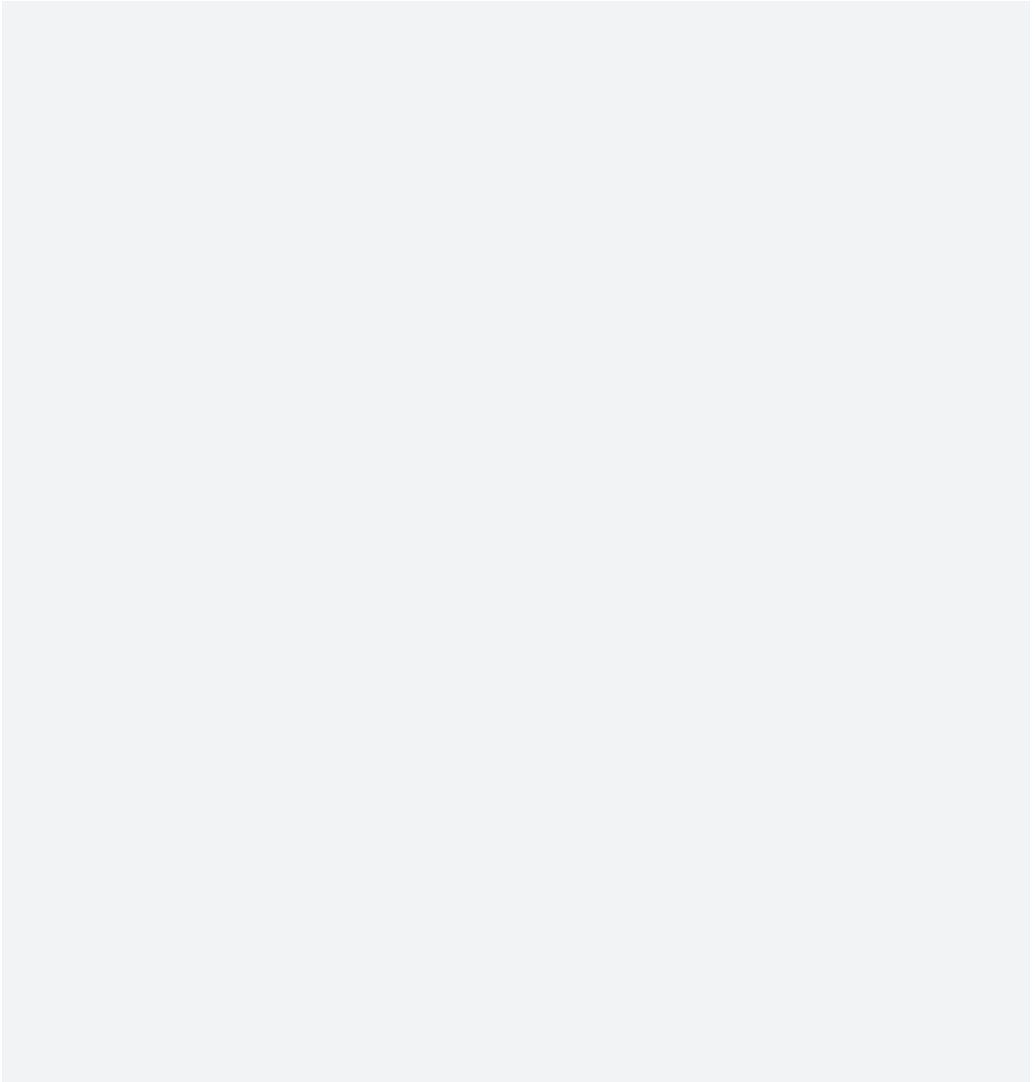
Best case scenario, what do you hope God will do over the next forty days?



Day 2: The Origin of Waiting

Creation

GENESIS 1:1-3:7



In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters. (Genesis 1:1-2)

The first two verses in Genesis might just be some of my favorite in all of Scripture. Do you know why? Maybe you caught it too? It's because of this sense of anticipation.

Before Creation even existed, this open expanse of nothingness seemed to hold its breath—ready and waiting, expecting something grand to happen.

And it did! Light, sky, night, day, land, sea, sun, moon, stars. All of it God breathed into existence with the words “Let there be” and after each act of creation, He declared it good. God's tongue spun the entire universe into being, giving way to a deep and satisfying exhale for that anticipatory inhale. No longer was the Spirit of God simply hovering. He was moving, breathing life into a world that hadn't existed before.

Then to top off His creation song, God makes man and woman and calls them good too. He establishes relationship with them and every day He met with them in the cool of the evening. It was a meeting and a conversation, a time when humanity simply enjoyed being in their Creator's presence. It was a time that they came to anticipate. They waited for it. They expected it.

So often in our modern language, the word “wait” has negative emotions tied to it.

When you think of the word *wait* what emotions or feelings rise up?

Wait for many of us feels like a bad four-letter word. It means we're being deprived of something or pushed aside, our desires unmet. At least for me, waiting is often connected with fear that the thing I'm waiting for won't actually happen.

The word *wait* often feels like a no.

But here in the context of Creation *wait* has a beautiful sense of expectancy. The Spirit hovered. All of that nothingness held its breath, waiting, and then life sprang out of nowhere!

Adam and Eve tended to the garden, cared for the creatures, nurtured their relationship with each other, all the while knowing that their Father would show up when the evening became cool and the sun started its watercolor descent. They waited for Him, but there was no fear of being denied. They expected good things from God, they expected Him to show up, and their expectations were met because in those sacred moments in Eden, everything was as it should be.

The relationship between God and humanity was as it should be. They never doubted Him to show up or take care of them. But all of that surety, dissolved when the serpent whispered doubt into Eve's ear for the first time. His line of questioning left Eve wondering, "Is God really good?"

The moment Eve took and ate of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil and handed it to Adam, both of them decided that God wasn't good. They stopped expecting good things from Him and decided He was holding out on them. They took and ate and in that moment their beautiful, expectant world was flipped on its head. Creation was no longer whole or expectant of God's goodness.

I think one of the reasons waiting is so hard is because the same doubt that crept in with Eve's bite of that fruit is now hardwired into us. We struggle to believe that God is good to us and we stop expecting good things from Him.

Do you believe God is good? The "church answer" to that is "yes, of course!" But let's set aside the church answers for a moment and settle into this waiting space. Do *you* believe God is good and kind right here in your waiting? How do you feel about Him? Do you feel like He's listening to you or aware of what you're feeling in this season? Or do you feel slighted, ignored, or unimportant to Him?

If we're going to allow these seasons of wanting and waiting to draw us closer to God, our first step is to remember who God really is and to ask Him to awaken our hearts to His goodness.

It's time to press back into the original intent of waiting and wait with expectancy, not for the object of our wait, but for God to show up and move.

It's time to expect God's goodness smack dab in the middle of our waiting.

It's time to remind our broken, busted, and bruised hearts that God is good, that He can be trusted, and that we can expect good things from Him.

You know what else happened that day the serpent slithered in? Someone else entered a season of waiting.

Read Genesis 3:22-24. Whose waiting started and what was that person waiting for?

Waiting can feel isolated and lonely. Depending on what you're waiting for, it may even feel like no one else in your community quite understands what you're going through. But God does. That day when He sent Adam and Eve out of Eden, God began to wait for the time when sin would be eliminated from the world He had created, and relationship with humanity would be restored.

In the waiting we can trust God's goodness. We can expect good things from Him. And we can rest in the truth that God is familiar with the ache of wanting.

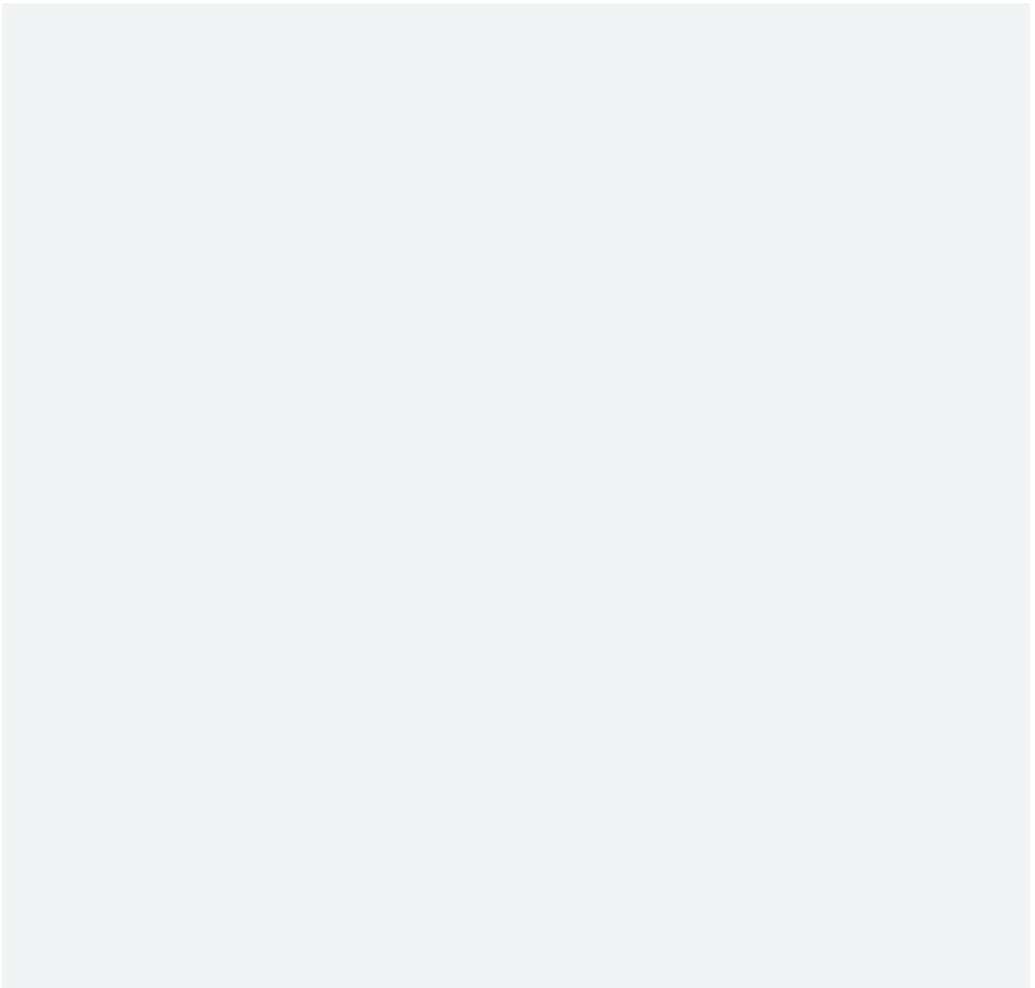
Have you ever considered that God is waiting? How does that truth help you draw closer to Him?



Day 3: Trusting God with the Details

Abram

GENESIS 12:1-9



Like Bilbo Baggins leaving the Shire in *The Hobbit* and setting off on his grand adventure, following God into something new can be exciting. We may ask God to do something in our lives, or we may feel Him speaking something new over us. This beginning stage of waiting in faith can be a time full of joy and anticipation. We're excited about what God will do and we're fully expecting Him to work.

Abram, whose name would later be changed to Abraham, faced an interesting such a call to something new: "Go...to the land that I will show you" (Genesis 12:1). God didn't provide exact coordinates of the destination. He didn't give Abram the name of the town he would eventually call home. God just said go, and Abram had to trust God to lead him.

Nowhere in today's passage do we see Abram questioning God—not when He calls Abram away from his home and his family, not when God promises this old man and his barren wife a child, and not when God promises to make Abram into a nation through whom the whole world would be blessed.

Abram believes it all and he goes, willingly following God into the unknown.

God is a detail-oriented God. We saw that a few days ago in Genesis 1 when God creates the universe. Every detail is shared. We'll see that later in Exodus when God gives Israel the Law and all the minute details of living a holy life are outlined for the people. But just because God knows all the details doesn't mean He *shares* all of them with us.

Part of the purpose of waiting seasons is to draw us into deeper relationship and deeper reliance upon God. If I have all the details of the wait—if I know where I'm going, how I'll get there, and all the obstacles I'll face along the way—I'm prone to speed on ahead of God and do life on my own. Or, depending on the details, I may run in the complete opposite direction because the journey ahead looks too intimidating, too impossible, too scary.

Withholding details may seem unkind on God's part, but it's actually one of the kindest things He could do because it keeps us from running scared and invites us to rely on Him. When we are able to respond like Abram and settle into the waiting and trust that God knows where He's leading us even if we don't know, there is freedom to be found in the waiting.

You know what else is really neat about God's relationship with Abram? Though when God calls Abram He gives him very little detail, God slowly reveals things as they go.

Read verses 7-9 again. What other details does God reveal to Abram and how does Abram respond to this new information?

Along the journey God meets Abram multiple times and when that happens, Abram sets up altars, marking the places where God speaks and reveals His presence. Abram also made space to seek God on his own. With or without new information, Abram made his relationship with God and his worship of God his priority. Long before God delivered on what He promised, Abram made the effort to draw near to God.

Let's approach our waiting with the same kind of faith Abram had—the kind of faith that is willing to wait on details and follow God obediently even when we don't know how things will play out along the way. Let's allow God to cultivate within us a heart that trusts His leading even when it feels like we're following blind. Let's choose to have a heart that worships and seeks God during every leg of the journey. Let's prioritize our relationship with Him even while we're waiting on what He's promised.

What details do you wish you knew about your waiting?

In what way do you see God's kindness in not letting you in on all of the details?

How can you prioritize your relationship with God?

Did you enjoy this preview?

Purchase the full version of *In the Waiting* from
Amazon.com or your favorite retailer.

Acknowledgements

The deeper I get into ministry, the more I'm convinced that this is a team effort, and the more I celebrate that fact. My team is one of the best. Behind every Bible study is a group of supportive, talented, truth-telling, Spirit-led people who make this possible, and it is my great pleasure turn the spotlight on them and highlight their pure awesomeness!

To my family: You've held me on the hard days, cheered me on, and celebrated with me as this ministry continues to grow. You've reminded to keep making writing a priority, and you have created space for me to that. You have supported me at every turn. I'm so grateful God gave me you.

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To my supporters—Brittany, Judy, Sara, Teresa, Patti, and Michele—the fact that you have invested in me, this work, and this ministry is so humbling. I'm not sure what you saw that made you think it was worth partnering up together, but I'm so glad you did.

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To my bandmates, Ruthie and Stephanie: You have poured into me more than you can imagine. You are friends, but more than that, you are my sisters. You provided the space for me to work through these lessons of waiting in my own life before I ever put them to the page. Thank you for hearing me, letting me take up space in your homes, and for being so

intentional in celebrating me and my work. I love doing life with you two and getting to grow together. You rock!

To my peer review bros, Jacob and Michael: Thank you, Michael, for letting me claim your couch as my office on days when I needed to work in a new space. Thank you, Jacob, for your many affirming words and hugs. I respect you both so much and value your opinions. You two are my top tier people when it comes to making sure I'm being true to Scripture and teaching in a way that is received by the dudes as well as the ladies. Thank you for taking the time to read early versions of this study and for your honest feedback. You guys made this study great!

To God: Words cannot express my gratitude that You have allowed me to do this work. Writing this study was hard, living it is even harder, but You have taught me so much about Your love and how You are present and gracious, no matter what season I am walking through. Nothing can separate me from You or Your love. In fact, even these hard waiting seasons are opportunities to know You more. Thank You for trusting me with these words and for blessing me with this team that has helped to make this project a reality.

And to you, dear reader: Thank you for trusting me to lead you down this road. I know it's a hard one, and I know I probably poked at some painful things, but I'm glad you stuck it out. Thank you for purchasing this book, for sharing it with a friend, for being brave and choosing to spend your time here. This has always been for you, and I hope that you've come out on the other end loving God, loving His story, and living devoted.

A Note from the Author



You did it! You made it to the end of this study, and I am so very proud of you for it. If this study impacted you in any way, I would love to hear from you. One of the greatest joys of this job is getting to hear people's stories of how God is working in their lives. If you have a story to share, I'd love to hear it! You can reach out to me on Instagram, Facebook, or send me an email. I'd love for us to stay connected!

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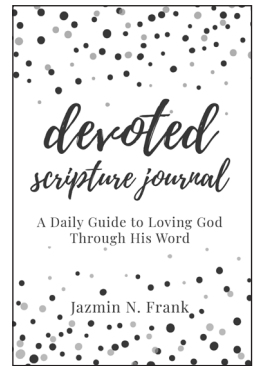
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DEVOTED SCRIPTURE JOURNAL: A DAILY GUIDE TO LOVING GOD THROUGH HIS WORD

The *Devoted Scripture Journal* is a guided Bible study tool designed to restore the relational aspect of Bible study. In this accessible and adaptable journal, you'll find 13 weeks' worth of daily Bible study pages. These daily pages provide a simple, adaptable structure for Bible study with sections for prayer, writing the Word, digging deeper, claiming joy, and recording a truth to meditate on each day.

This journal also comes with other helpful resources to grow your relationship with God, including:

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- 30 day reading plan
- prayer pages
- 10 ways to revive your devotional routine

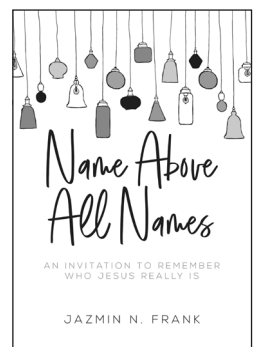


NAME ABOVE ALL NAMES: AN INVITATION TO REMEMBER WHO JESUS REALLY IS

This 31 day study through the gospel of John invites you to remember who Jesus is by focusing on the names of Jesus.

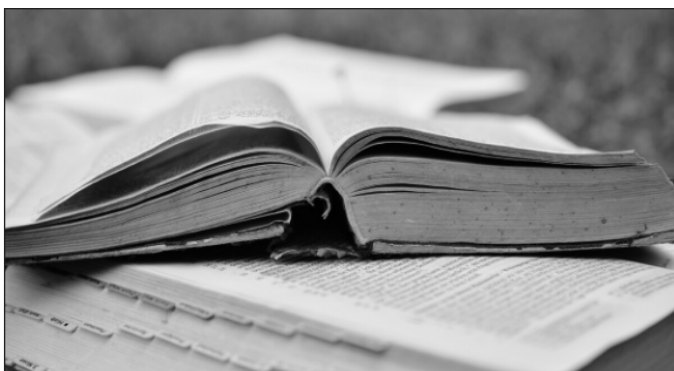
The names of Jesus tell us plainly who he is. They show us how we can relate to him, what he has accomplished, and in some cases, the names of Jesus also define us. So in remembering who Jesus is, we also are reminded of who we are in him.

Let this be the season you remember the name that is above every name—the name of Jesus. And in remembering him may you come to trust him more than you ever have before.



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