



I SEE A CHURCH

# SESSION TWO

I SEE A CHURCH MARKED BY THE POWER AND  
PRESENCE OF GOD

A woman in a black halter-neck dress is being baptized in the ocean. A man in a black t-shirt is pouring water over her head. Another man is visible on the right, also in a black t-shirt. The background shows the ocean with waves.

# WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

Great are the works of the Lord;  
they are pondered by all who delight in them.

Glorious and majestic are his deeds,  
and his righteousness endures forever. **Psalm 111:2-3**

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## GOD MAKES HIS POWER AND PRESENCE KNOWN TO US.

Have you ever stood on the edge of the Grand Canyon, or watched a magnificent sunset, and simply felt awe and wonder at the creative power of God?

Have you ever had a quiet moment, by yourself or maybe with a close friend, where you experienced the presence of God in a deep and mysterious way?

Whether through sweeping grandeur or gentle whispers, God makes his power and presence known to us. Once we experience it, we long for more.

That is one of the purposes of the church: to provide us a place and a community, in which we experience the power and presence of God. That's what we're going to discuss this week.

# I SEE A CHURCH

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OPEN YOUR GROUP WITH PRAYER.

## GETTING STARTED

*When we share our stories, we can encourage someone else and learn. We can experience the presence of God, as He helps us be brave enough to reveal our thoughts and feelings.*

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*Then, begin your time together by using the following questions and activities to get people talking.*

1. Tell about a time when you experienced a deep sense of awe—because of something you saw, something you heard, or something you experienced. What happened? What did “awe” feel like?

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2. How has our exposure to incredible special effects in movies, lifelike simulations in video games, and so forth, impacted our ability to be awed?

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# RESPOND

Now that we have spent some time reflecting on what God might be saying to us, let's talk about how we will apply the wisdom we have learned from the teaching and Bible study. Then think about practical steps we can take in the coming week to live out what we have learned.



**APPLY WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED.**

## ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS

How can our worship help other people experience God?

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The word "fellowship" in our culture has become less potent than it was in New Testament times. How is our fellowship different from the radical commitment to one another practiced by the early church?

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The early church members didn't just pray on their own, they prayed corporately. How often do you gather to pray with other believers? What might happen to your spiritual life if you did that more often?

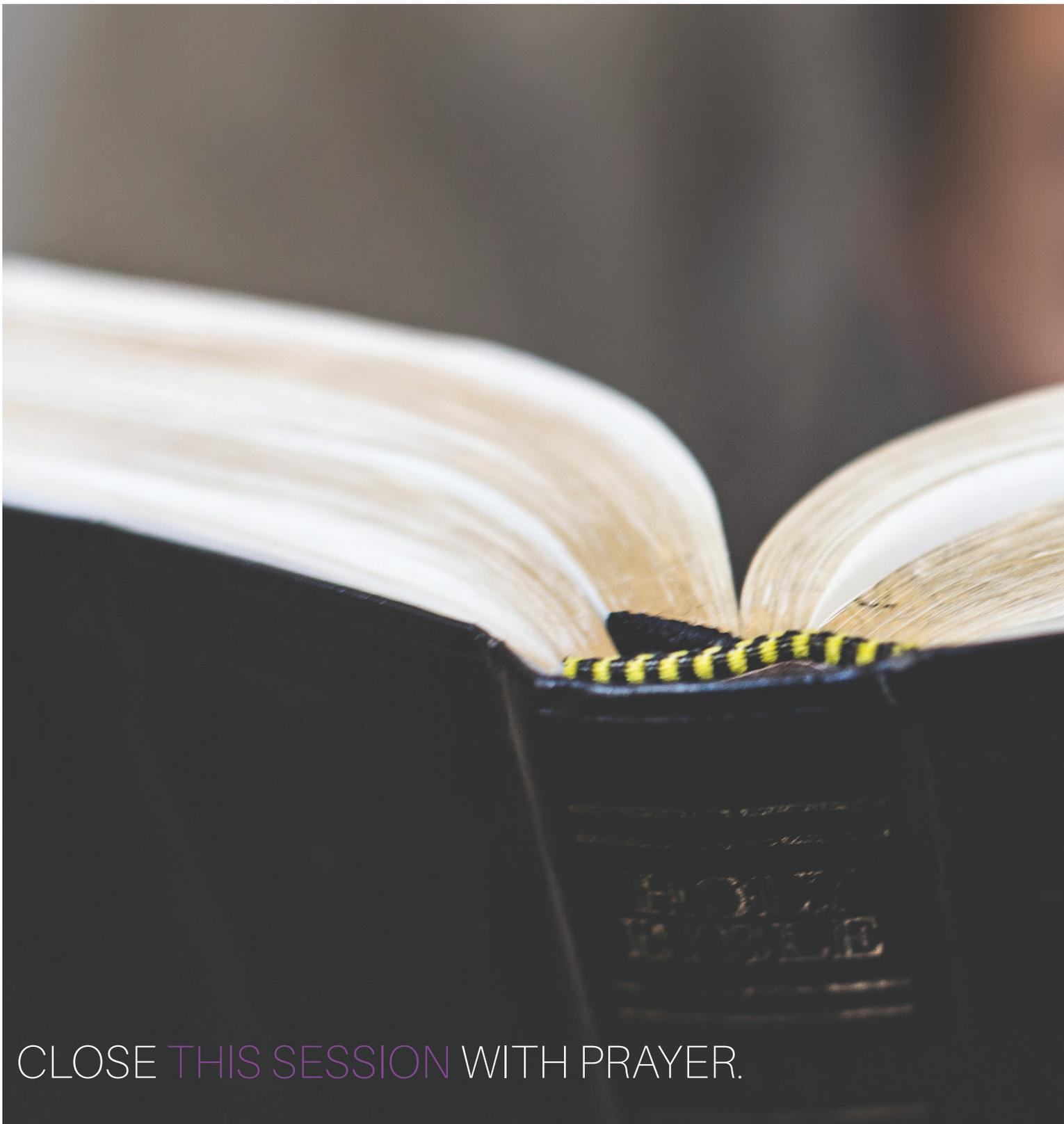
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What is one change you could make in your attitudes or actions that might allow you to experience more of the power and presence of God?

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Allow everyone to answer this question: "How can we pray for you this week?" Be sure to write prayer requests on your Prayer and Praise Report on page 100.

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CLOSE THIS SESSION WITH PRAYER.

# GOING DEEPER



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You can explore the following Bible passage as a group (if there is time) or on your own between sessions. Try writing down your reflections in a journal or in this study guide. A great way to gain insight on a passage is to read it in several different translations. You may want to use a Bible app or website to compare translations.

## **READ 2 CORINTHIANS 1:8-11**

What hardships did Paul and his companions endure?

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How did God answer their prayers?

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What does Paul request of the Corinthian church?

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## **READ ROMANS 15:30-33**

What did Paul ask the church at Rome to do for him?

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What specific requests does he ask them to pray for?

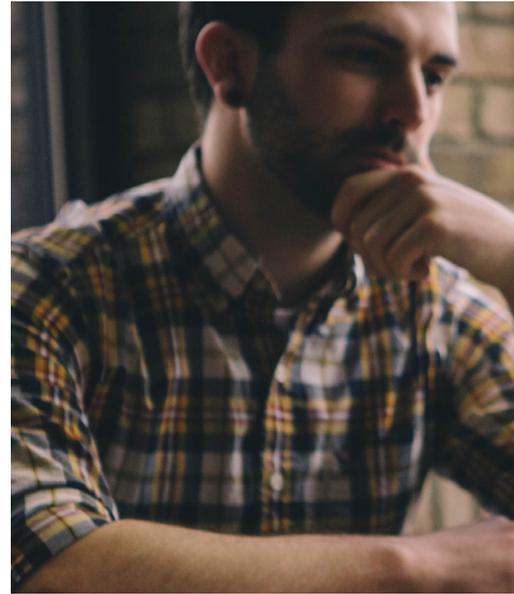
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He said that praying for him would be a way of joining in his struggle. Have you ever experienced that when praying for someone? What happened?

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# DAILY REFLECTIONS

*Ask God to speak to you through His word.*

## DEVOTIONALS

### Day 1.

**READ PSALM 46:1**

God is our refuge and strength,  
an ever-present help in trouble.

**CONSIDER:**

What does this verse tell us about God's power? What challenges are you currently facing that will require God's strength and help?

### Day 2.

**READ HEBREWS 10:21-22**

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.

**CONSIDER:**

Spend some time just picturing the image described in these verses. What situation in your life feels like this picture? How are we able to say "we will not fear" in the face of this chaos?

### Day 3.

**READ PSALM 46: 4-5**

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. God is within her, she will not fall; God will help her at break of day.

**CONSIDER:**

What promises do we find in these verses? What particular area of your life do you need God's help with?



*Use these daily devotions to go deeper into this week’s topic. Each day, read the verse given. Take your time. Ask God to speak to you through His word. Listen to what he wants to say to you, and respond to him as you meditate on the truths of Scripture.*

**DEVOTIONALS**

## Day 4.

**READ PSALM 46:6**

Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts.

**CONSIDER:**

In what ways are “nations in uproar” in our world today? In what ways is your own world in uproar? What do you need from God in this moment?

## Day 5.

**READ PSALM 46:7**

The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.

**CONSIDER:**

What does God promise us? How does God serve as a fortress for his people? What do you think that means, from a practical standpoint?

## Day 6.

Use the following space to write any thoughts God has put in your heart and mind about the things we have looked at in this session and during your devotional time this week. You may also want to write down observations or questions that you’d like to share with the group at your next meeting.

**SUMMARY:**

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