

6-SESSION BIBLE STUDY FOR TEENS



Kingdom Authority

Teen Bible Study

LIVING UNDER GOD'S RULE

TONY EVANS



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Lifeway Press®
Brentwood, Tennessee

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Published by Lifeway Press® • © 2023 Tony Evans

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ISBN: 978-1-0877-8316-1

Item number: 005841858

Dewey decimal classification: 242

Subject heading: RELIGION / Christian Ministry / Youth

My deepest thanks go to Mrs. Heather Hair for her skills and insights in collaboration on this manuscript.

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Printed in the United States of America

Student Ministry Publishing • Lifeway Resources • 200 Powell Place, Suite 100 • Brentwood, TN 37027

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About the Author

DR. TONY EVANS is the founder and senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas, founder and president of The Urban Alternative, former chaplain of the NBA's Dallas Mavericks, and author of over 100 books, booklets, and Bible studies. The first African American to earn a doctorate of theology from Dallas Theological Seminary, he has been named one of the twelve most effective preachers in the English-speaking world by Baylor University. Dr. Evans holds the honor of writing and publishing the first full-Bible commentary and study Bible by an African American.

His radio broadcast, The Alternative with Dr. Tony Evans, can be heard on more than 1,400 US outlets daily and in more than 130 countries.

Dr. Evans launched the Tony Evans Training Center in 2017, an online learning platform providing quality seminary-style courses for a fraction of the cost to any person in any place. The goal is to increase Bible literacy not only in lay people but also in those Christian leaders who cannot afford nor find the time for formal ongoing education.

Dr. Tony Evans was married to his late wife, Lois, for nearly fifty years. They are the proud parents of four, grandparents of thirteen and great-grandparents of four.

For more information, visit tonyevans.org.

How to Get the Most from this Study



This Bible study book includes six weeks of content for group and personal study.

GROUP SESSIONS

Regardless of what day of the week your group meets, each week of content begins with the group session. Each group session uses the following format to facilitate meaningful interaction among group members, with God’s Word, and with the teaching of Dr. Evans.

START. This page includes questions to get the conversation started and to introduce the video teaching.

WATCH. This page includes key points from Dr. Evans’s teaching, along with blanks for taking notes as participants watch the video.

DISCUSS. This page includes questions and statements that guide the group to respond to Dr. Evans’s video teaching and to relevant Bible passages.

PERSONAL STUDY

Each week provides three days of Bible study and learning activities for individual engagement between group sessions: “Hit the Streets” and two Bible studies.

HIT THE STREETS. This section highlights practical steps for taking the week’s teaching and putting it into practice.

BIBLE STUDIES. These personal studies revisit stories, Scriptures, and themes introduced in the videos in order to understand and apply them on a personal level.

How to Access the Videos

This Bible study has six videos—one for each session. These videos enhance the content and launch discussion.

To stream the *Kingdom Authority* teen Bible study video teaching sessions, follow these steps:

1. Purchase the group video bundle at lifeway.com/kingdomauthority.
2. Go to my.lifeway.com/redeem and register or log in to your Lifeway account.
3. Enter the redemption code provided at purchase to gain access to your group-use video license:

Once you've entered your personal redemption code, you can stream the video teaching sessions any time from your Digital Media page on my.lifeway.com or watch them via the Lifeway On Demand app on any TV or mobile device via your Lifeway account.

There's no need to enter your code more than once! To watch your streaming videos, just log in to your Lifeway account at my.lifeway.com or watch using the Lifeway On Demand app.

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Stream on these devices:
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WEEK 1

The Concept of Kingdom Authority

Start

Welcome to group session 1.

Imagine trying to go through life wearing glasses that have never been cleaned. After years of wear and handling, you would have smudges, scratches, grime, and all kinds of grossness all over them. Imagine trying to walk the halls of your school with them on. Or have a conversation. Or even scroll through Netflix.

The videos for this study were filmed in Ireland, where everywhere you look is a more brilliant shade of green. The beauty of scenery testifies to God's great power and creativity. But if dirty glasses were clouding your vision, you wouldn't be able to take it all in. The beauty would still be there, but you wouldn't be able to fully appreciate it.

**Why is it important to be able to see clearly
as you navigate your physical life?**

**Why is it important to be able to see clearly
as you navigate your spiritual life?**

When we are unable to see clearly, it is difficult to know what steps to take or to recognize dangers ahead of us. Moving freely through life often requires sharp physical eyesight. But did you know that our spiritual eyesight is just as critical? In fact, spiritual eyesight is even more critical. Without a right spiritual perspective, we will not be able to see the truth and will miss out on recognizing how to access the kingdom authority God has for us. That's why Paul prayed in Ephesians 1:18 that our spiritual eyes (the eyes of our hearts) would be opened and enlightened.

As we start our exploration of the subject of kingdom authority, we must start with the eyes of our own hearts. It's only when we see God for who He truly is that we can know how to align ourselves underneath His righteous rule and tap into the spiritual power we need to live a life of kingdom authority.

Ask someone to pray, then watch group session 1.

Watch

Fill in the blanks and use the space to take notes on session 1.

Kingdom authority is the divinely delegated _____
and _____ for believers to act on God's behalf
in ruling His creation underneath the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

If all you see is what you see, you do not see all there
is to be _____.

God has written out your _____.

That kingdom (Satan's) wants to _____ God's rule in your life.

Our _____ go right to the heart of the throne
of God and what He wants to see worked out in our daily lives.

When you accepted Jesus Christ, you changed _____.

Video sessions available at lifeway.com/kingdomauthority.

Discuss

Use the following to discuss the video teaching.

One of the primary things Paul wanted believers in Ephesus to see once the eyes of their hearts were opened was where they were standing—where they were located, spiritually. Paul tells us this in Ephesians 2:4-6:

But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our wrongdoings, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

EPHESIANS 2:4-6

It's easy to forget where you are when you cannot see. Have you ever had to open your eyes during a dream in order to figure out if you were in the dream or the safety of your own bed? That's okay when you are dreaming but it's not okay when you are trying to live your life with kingdom authority.

Share about a time when you were confused where you were or got lost. What did you learn through that experience?

What are some reasons why it's important for believers to know where we're situated in relationship to God and His kingdom?

In the video, Dr. Evans talks to us from a very high place called the Cliffs of Moher in Ireland, and it is one of the most scenic locations on the planet. These cliffs rise to just over seven hundred feet at their highest point. Paul wants us to realize where we are, sharpen our spiritual perspective, and to help us see that we are seated with Christ in the heavenly realm (see Eph. 2:6).

Jesus's seat in heaven is the seat of authority. It's the throne from which He reigns. What implications does it have for our faith to know that we are seated there with him?

How does it change your view of life's obstacles and opportunities when you realize you're seated with Christ on high in the heavenly places?

Dr. Evans set the stage for our study on kingdom authority by letting us know where the battles in life really take place. He taught that everything visible and physical is first preceded by something invisible and spiritual. So, if you want to address the visible, physical realm, you must understand, identify, and address the invisible, spiritual cause. Because if you miss the invisible, spiritual cause, you will not understand how to address the visible, physical realities. There is a spiritual realm of authority, and there is a battle that takes place in that realm.

Share a time you witnessed the invisible, spiritual realm impacting your physical reality.

Dr. Evans defined kingdom authority as *the divinely delegated right and responsibility for believers to act on God's behalf in ruling His creation underneath the Lordship of Jesus Christ.*

Why do believers need to grab hold of and exercise this God-given authority? What happens if we don't?

What are some practical steps we can take to engage with God and develop our spiritual eyesight?

Let's end our Bible study time in prayer.

Prayer

Lord, when it becomes easy to see only that which is right before our eyes, help us to see from Your vantage point instead. Remind us that we are seated on high with You and need to view all of life through a spiritual lens. In Jesus's name, amen.



PERSONAL DAY: HIT THE STREETS

Seeing the Spiritual

If you've ever flown in an airplane and looked out the window, you'll notice how small and orderly everything looks down below. That's because you are looking at it from way up. But when you land on the ground, you have a very different, more chaotic experience because you can't see the big picture.

Until you learn to exchange human wisdom for the big picture—wisdom from God—you'll stay stuck in the chaos, mess, and traffic jams of life. Whether it be personal traffic, relationship traffic, circumstantial traffic, or any other, if you don't learn to view the routes and pathways of life from the perspective of heaven, you won't be able to access the kingdom authority that rightfully belongs to you.

You have to start from where you are seated. And where are you seated? With Jesus (see Eph. 2:6). Therefore, you must learn to view all of life from a kingdom perspective. When you learn to operate and make your decisions from where you are truly seated with Jesus, you will access the authority you need to live out the fullness of God's plans.

The following are three key passages that describe the spiritual realm and how to access it. Read them slowly, then use the space provide to summarize them in your own words.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:18

Personal Summary:

*Set your mind on the things that are above,
not on the things that are on earth.*

COLOSSIANS 3:2

Personal Summary:

*“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, Nor are your ways My ways,”
declares the LORD. “For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are
My ways higher than your ways And My thoughts than your thoughts.”*

ISAIAH 55:8-9

Personal Summary:

**What are common themes between these three verses? What
do they teach you about having a kingdom perspective?**

Prayer

Close in prayer, asking God to give you a kingdom perspective.



PERSONAL DAY: BIBLE STUDY 1

The War for Authority

Even though they occupy the same island and the land may appear to be the same, Ireland (where we filmed the videos for this series) is divided into two different countries. Ireland is an independent nation, and Northern Ireland is a part of the United Kingdom and governed by the British.

So, if you were to travel from Ireland to Northern Ireland, and you wanted to gas up your car or go to a restaurant or buy some souvenirs, you would need to exchange your euros (the currency of Ireland) for pounds (the currency of Northern Ireland). Euros are not accepted currency in Northern Ireland, just as the British pound is not accepted in Ireland.

The accepted currency of these two countries reflects much deeper matters like ownership of land, governance of people, allegiance of the citizens, and the rule of authorities. The cows and sheep don't care which side of an imaginary line they are on. The pasture land might look the same, but the governments of these nations differ significantly. Who has authority and how that authority can be applied is very important.

Visiting Ireland brought this insight to my mind. While a battle for authority can often pop up between nations, states, or regions in our world, a larger conflict is at work. That is the conflict in the spiritual realm itself. It is a conflict for spiritual authority and the right to rule. A battle is being waged between God and the enemy, Satan. As believers, we know God has ultimate authority, but that doesn't stop Satan from waging war against Him. We see this war played out in the Scriptures and in our lives.

To review, kingdom authority is *the divinely delegated right and responsibility for believers to act on God's behalf in ruling His creation underneath the Lordship of Jesus Christ.*

What does the phrase "the Lordship of Jesus Christ" mean?

What elements of God's creation has He given us to rule?

Name some strategies Satan uses to limit or reduce the spiritual authority in believers.

Let's turn our attention to a biblical example that demonstrates the kind of spiritual battle that's always being waged in the spiritual realm.

Read Daniel 10:10-14.

Then behold, a hand touched me and shook me on my hands and knees. And he said to me, "Daniel, you who are treasured, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand at your place, for I have now been sent to you." And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. Then he said to me, "Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding this and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. Now I have come to explain to you what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days still future."

DANIEL 10:10-14

In this passage, we are dropped into the middle of Daniel praying. He was over eighty years old at this point, and God gave him a glimpse of a future conflict. The "prince of the kingdom of Persia" was not a human ruler in Persia, but a demonic spirit seeking to influence the political affairs of the earth. Michael is an angel of God who was sent to help. The battle was real but God had the upper hand.

What was Daniel being made aware of in this time of prayer?

God was opening Daniel's eyes to the invisible, spiritual battle that wages all around us. Satan takes great pleasure in actively working against us and our prayers. When our prayers are not immediately answered, we might naively assume that God doesn't care or cannot overcome the plans of the enemy. God does care and is mightier than Satan. God heard and answered Daniel's prayers, but the answer to those prayers wasn't immediate. It was delayed for several weeks. Satan tried to oppose the plan of God but was ultimately unable to stop Him. Delayed prayers don't always mean denied prayers. Satan's power extends only as far as God allows it. When God allows Satan to interfere, it's only because God knows and sees the big picture.

What comfort did God's angel provide Daniel in this passage? What comfort should that provide for us?

Daniel was reassured and affirmed by his angelic visitor in his prayer. Daniel was called "you who are treasured." These verses illustrate that though our prayers may be momentarily delayed, God's authority is never threatened. If all Daniel saw was the delay, he would have missed God's dedication and deliverance. Spiritual warfare takes place continually. Understanding this will help you to effectively navigate it. Satan loves to try and trick followers of Jesus out of accessing their full spiritual authority under the Lordship of Jesus.

Why does Satan seek to keep God's kingdom authority from being used by believers?

How does the enemy attack you and try to divert your attention and focus away from God and His kingdom?

What would be a good way to remind yourself or others that issues you encounter may actually be rooted in Satan's schemes to disarm you of spiritual authority?

Satan gets us to squander our spiritual authority by leading us to fight the wrong battles. Satan loves to get us caught up in fighting other people, such as our family members, friends, or people we come in contact with in our lives. But when we fall for his schemes, we wind up fighting the wrong wars and the wrong opponents. Understanding who the enemy is helps you to be equipped to defeat the enemy. If we're fighting the wrong battle, we won't win the war.

Prayer

As you come to a close on today's personal reflection, take a moment to pray. Spend some time in prayer asking God to align your heart and spirit with Him so that you can access the spiritual authority He has for you. You might also want to pray for the eyes of your heart to be opened to identify the spiritual warfare waging around you and request discernment on how to respond.



PERSONAL DAY: BIBLE STUDY 2

When Normalcy Shouldn't Be the Norm

Have you or your parents ever ordered something online only to have it get delayed somewhere in the process? You expected it to arrive the next day, or at worst just a few days later. But for some reason, it never does.

The days turn to weeks, and your item still hasn't arrived. You look at the tracking information every day to try and see if it's any closer to showing up. If nothing arrives and enough days have passed, you may stop looking at the tracking information as frequently as you once did. You might resign yourself that your package will never come.

I can only imagine what Daniel must have felt when he prayed to God but did not hear any response for twenty-one days (see Dan. 10:13). That's three full weeks on a pretty significant prayer need. Did Daniel feel abandoned? Did he feel forgotten? Did he think there might be a glitch in the system? I'm curious if Daniel even began to doubt God's interest in him or His willingness to help out.

The good thing about Scripture is that we don't have to guess. Daniel 10 gives us insight into how Daniel felt during that time of waiting.

Read Daniel 10:2-3 and answer the following questions:

In those days, I, Daniel, had been mourning for three entire weeks. I did not eat any tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter my mouth, nor did I use any ointment at all until the entire three weeks were completed.

DANIEL 10:2-3

What clues from these verses give insight into how Daniel was doing during those three weeks?

Have you ever had to wait on an answer to prayer and the wait caused you personal distress? Describe the thoughts you had toward God and toward the situation during that time.

Daniel entered a season of mourning to wait on God. The original language word for *mourning* used in verse 2 refers to how one would respond to the death of a family member. Daniel fasted, which was normal, but went even further by refusing to clean himself (this is what is meant by ointment). Daniel agonized as he waited.

What does Daniel's grief tell you about the importance of the prayer request?

When have you been in a season like Daniel was in? What changes occurred? How did these changes affected your relationship with God?

When you or I desperately desire an answer to a prayer, it will often affect what we eat, when we eat, or even how well we sleep. Rather than spend that time worrying, we ought to use these behavioral changes to remind us to go before the Lord more frequently in prayer, asking for His response. What's more, they ought to motivate us to examine our lives and alignment under God. Are we trusting God and embracing His kingdom authority? It can be a time for introspection as we seek God and His answer to our prayers.

How does prayer and making our requests known to God connect us to God and His kingdom plans?

The delay in God's reply pushed Daniel into a period of mourning and persistent seeking of the Lord. Because Daniel responded with intentional pursuit rather than apathetic dismissal of his situation, he willingly tapped into the kingdom authority available to him.

I know that we have all had prayer requests hanging out there. The enemy is waging war against us, trying to discourage and trick us into thinking God doesn't care or is not powerful enough to answer our prayers. Be encouraged, so that in the delay, we are not disarmed. We can continue to diligently seek God's face like Daniel. Spiritual authority is ours because Jesus won it for us at the cross. Seeking God unites us with God's power.

As we unite with God's power, we grow in our faith. Spiritual maturity prepares us to press into God and into His ways in the heat of the battle. It forges our bond with Him and helps us trust Him more. Consider this example from James.

A prayer of a righteous person, when it is brought about, can accomplish much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the earth for three years and six months. Then he prayed again, and the sky poured rain and the earth produced its fruit.

JAMES 5:16-18

In what ways do you think a person's spiritual maturity and intentions matter to how God supplies answers to prayers?

If you want to reclaim what the enemy has stolen from you or holds hostage from you, pursue God as a kingdom disciple—a verbal, visible follower of Jesus Christ. Kingdom disciples embrace kingdom authority and pursue God both in grief or in great triumph because they trust the ruler of the kingdom and His goals.

When have circumstances in your life led you to hold onto God and press into Him? What did you learn about Him and His rule in that time?

Obedience to God and alignment underneath His kingdom rule opens the doors in the heavenly realm that can't be opened without God's help. That's what spiritual, kingdom authority entails. It entails the wisdom and discernment needed to tap into God's authority and embrace His rule.

Prayer

Pray right now and ask God to reveal to you what areas of your life could use some spiritual growth and development, so that you are in alignment under Him. Also ask God for a greater fervency when it comes to continuing to seek Him for the answers to your prayers that have gone unanswered. Praise Him for the times He has shown up in your life in amazing ways.