A Study Guide for *Gentle & Lowly* by Dane Ortlund

No book has generated more conversation thus far in 2020 than *Gentle & Lowly: The Heart of Christ for Sinners and Sufferers* by Dane Ortlund. The reading of the book influenced me significantly and has caused me to not only share it with others but also develop this study guide.

This study guide is the result of my own readings and not necessarily reflective of the author or publisher’s views or endorsements. Likewise, while *Gentle & Lowly* is a profound book, I do not affirm every nuance of the author’s viewpoints. Therefore, every reader should always read in light of Scripture.

It is my desire that this study guide will help you to think more deeply about God’s Word and about the author’s points. Therefore, I have prayerfully put this together in hopes that it will cause you to grow in your relationship with God through Christ.

About This Study Guide

This study guide is designed both for individual and group study. It is not meant to be complex, with each chapter identifying a key passage to read with the chapter, three questions to answer about what you read, and a journaling prompt. The left margin has been left a bit larger so that you may hole-punch it and insert it into a notebook and is meant to be printed on A5 paper.

I suggest that for each chapter, you study in the same way:

1) Begin each study in prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide and convict you.
2) Read the key passage noted on the study guide (which sometimes may differ from the author’s key text).
3) Read the chapter in *Gentle & Lowly*.
4) Answer the three questions provided.
5) Finally, maintain a journal while doing this study. Use the journaling prompt to write about what you are learning and how it applies to you. Write as much or as little as you choose. Do this consistently and you’ll be surprised at how God is transforming you through what you learn.

For those participating in a group study, some of what you learn may be very personal (especially in the journal prompt). I urge you to develop a relationship with your group, but also share only what you are comfortable revealing.

Most importantly, be honest and personal, enjoying the work of God in your life as you embark on this study of who Christ is.

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### Key Passage: Colossians 2:6-15

#### Questions:
1. Who is Christ?
2. What is the state of your relationship with Him?
3. What do you hope to gain from this study?

#### Journaling Prompt:
If you could change one aspect of your relationship with God, what would it be?

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### Chapter 1: His Very Heart

#### Key Passage: Phil. 2:5-11

#### Questions:
1. Why is it important to know Christ’s heart?
2. If an unbeliever asks about Jesus, how would you describe His gentle and lowly character?
3. What is your natural instinct about who Christ is? How does that impact your relationship with Him?

#### Journaling Prompt:
What burdens are weighing down your life right now? After reading, what hope are you able to have in Christ?

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### Chapter 2: His Heart in Action

#### Key Passage: Matthew 9:35-38

#### Questions:
1. What is the difference between Christ’s love and Christ is love?
2. How do you maintain a healthy, balanced view of who Christ is?
3. Christians frequently divide the roles of Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. But how are they connected?

#### Journaling Prompt:
What does Christ’s compassion look like in your life?
### Key Passage: Hebrews 4:14 – 5:10

#### Questions:
1. How does Hebrews 5:2 flow from what is learned in Hebrews 4:15 (the previous chapter)?
2. What does it mean that Christ deals gently with people?
3. Ortlund cites a quote from Thomas Goodwin that begins, “The glory and happiness of Christ are enlarged . . .” Read the quote and then explain what it means in your own words.

#### Journaling Prompt:
What do you need to bring to Christ? Consider a recurring sin or something you are ashamed to think about.

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### Key Passage: Isaiah 52:13 – 53:12

#### Questions:
1. How would you define Christ’s ability to sympathize?
2. Why does it matter that Christ remained sinless?
3. How has Christ been tested similar to you? Can you cite examples from the Bible?

#### Journaling Prompt:
Write about a time you know Christ sympathized with you. How does that give you future hope?

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### Key Passage: Hebrews 12:1-7

#### Questions:
1. Does the truth of this chapter give you an excuse to sin? Why or why not (cite Scripture)?
2. What is the significance of Christ sitting at the right-hand of God?
3. What is the significance of Christ sitting at the right-hand of God?

#### Journaling Prompt:
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#### Journaling Prompt:
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### Chapter 6: I Will Never Cast Out

**Key Passage:**

John 17:1-26

**Questions:**

1. What are some points of theology that a person learns from these verses? Does a particular point resonate with you?
2. What do you learn from the John Bunyan quotes in this chapter?
3. What objections can you raise about deserving Christ’s assurance? Why can you be certain that he will not cast you out?

**Journaling Prompt:**

Have you ever felt cast out? How did you respond? How does what you learned help you to respond in the future?

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### Chapter 7: What Our Sins Evoke

**Key Passage:**

Hosea 11:1 – 12:1

**Questions:**

1. What does it mean to feel the weight of our sin?
2. What is God’s response to sin? Answer completely with Scripture.
3. Answer the author’s question: What are we given when we are given Christ?

**Journaling Prompt:**

What level of trust do you have in Christ’s willingness to forgive sin? Do you have any sin to confess?

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### Chapter 8: To the Uttermost

**Key Passage:**

Hebrews 7:11-28

**Questions:**

1. How is intercession defined?
2. Is the doctrine of intercession neglected today? Why or why not?
3. What is the relationship between intercession, justification, and atonement?

**Journaling Prompt:**

How do you need Christ’s intercession for you in this moment?
### Key Passage: 1 John 2:1-6

#### Questions:
1. What is the difference between an intercessor and an advocate? Why is Christ’s role as both important?
2. What does an advocate do?
3. What is the significance of the word ‘propitiation’?

#### Journaling Prompt:
Why do you need an advocate? How does Christ’s advocacy impact your life?

### Key Passage: Matthew 11:25-30

#### Questions:
1. What does Christ’s heart reveal?
2. What does Christ’s heart indicate for Christians?
3. How can you live in this reality?

#### Journaling Prompt:
Ponder Christ’s heart. How does Christ respond to your heart? How do you respond to Him?

### Key Passage: John 11:28-37

#### Questions:
1. How is Christ both human and divine? What does this mean for how he expresses emotions?
2. What is the significance of emotions being impacted by the fall?
3. Cite examples of Christ’s emotions. What is their relationship? (Hint: they are perfect).

#### Journaling Prompt:
How do Christ’s emotions impact His relationship with you and your trust of Him?
Chapter 12: A Tender Friend

Questions:
1. As a friend of sinners, did Jesus approve of sin? Why or why not? Cite Scripture
2. Define friendship. What does friendship with Christ look like?
3. What role does mutuality play in friendship with Christ?

Journaling Prompt:
Consider that Christ does not refuse your presence. If this is true what do you want to share right now?

Chapter 13: Why the Spirit

Questions:
1. What is the role and work of the Holy Spirit?
2. Read John Chapters 14-16. Why did the Spirit need to come?
3. How does the Holy Spirit connect you to Christ?

Journaling Prompt:
Describe the Holy Spirit’s work in your life. How do you know the Spirit is at work in you?

Chapter 14: Father of Mercies

Questions:
1. How does God’s love work with His judgment? (See chapter 11 if needed).
2. What is mercy? How does it compare with grace?
3. How is God’s mercy relevant today?

Journaling Prompt:
Describe a time when you deserved judgment but received God’s mercy instead.

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### Chapter 15: His Natural Work & His Strange Work

**Key Passage:** Lam. 3:22-33 (Look at Hebrews 12:3-10 again)

**Questions:**
1. Why is God’s sovereignty important? What are some key principles of God’s sovereignty?
2. How are God’s attributes perfectly balanced?
3. How is God perfectly just? What confidence does this give you?

**Journaling Prompt:**
What is your reaction when caught by surprise? Is God surprised? What does this mean for trusting Him?

### Chapter 16: The Lord, the Lord

**Key Passage:** Psalm 86:1-17

**Questions:**
1. What other verses answer the question ‘Who is God?’
2. How is Christ the revelation of God’s character?
3. What does it mean that God is provoked to anger, but not to love?

**Journaling Prompt:**
Consider question 3. What is the significance of this in your life?

### Chapter 17: His Ways Are Not Our Ways

**Key Passage:** Isaiah 55:1-13

**Questions:**
1. Explain the concepts: People are made in God’s image. People make God in their image.
2. Consider the author’s statement that people diminish the heart of God’s pardon. Do you agree with that statement? Why?
3. How should you understand, “God’s ways are not our ways?”

**Journaling Prompt:**
Assess your relationship with God. Are you wandering? Do you need to return to Him? What needs to change?
### Chapter 18: Yearning Bowels

**Key Passage:** Jeremiah 31:10–25

**Questions:**
1. What is the significance of God’s yearning?
2. How is God’s compassion and mercy manifested towards us?
3. What does it mean to receive God’s mercy?

**Journaling Prompt:** What do you need to repent of? How can you receive God’s mercy?

### Chapter 19: Rich in Mercy

**Key Passage:** Ephesians 2:1–10

**Questions:**
1. Why is it significant that God is both loving and merciful?
2. What is a person’s natural inclination? What does it mean to be dead in sin?

**Journaling Prompt:** Based on this chapter, how can you have confidence in God? Are there specific circumstances you need to trust in Him?

### Chapter 20: Our Law-ish Heart, His Lavish Heart

**Key Passage:** Romans 8:31–39

**Questions:**
1. Why would our hearts need to be aligned to Christ? How?
2. How do our works ‘minimize’ the gospel and Christ’s work?
3. How does the gospel define who you are?

**Journaling Prompt:** Examine your life deeply. Who/what are you trusting? Works or Christ?
### Key Passage:
**Romans 5:1-10**

### Questions:
2. How do believers respond to sin? How should they respond to sin?
3. What is justification? How has God provided for your justification?

### Journaling Prompt:
What’s your mess right now? How does God sustain you during that mess?

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### Key Passage:
**John 13:1-20**

### Questions:
1. Think about Christ’s ministry. What did he endure during that time?
2. Read Psalm 22:1. Why are these words so profound? How was Christ forsaken?
3. What does it mean that Christ loved until His own end?

### Journaling Prompt:
What did Christ endure for you? In light of this, honestly assess your relationship with Him.

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### Key Passage:
**John 3:16-21**

### Questions:
1. What does it mean to glorify God?
2. It’s worth asking again, is God’s grace an excuse to sin?
3. What do you look forward to most in eternity?

### Journaling Prompt:
Reflect on the reading. How will you be received in heaven?

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