

SHARING



COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY

Making disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ in our communities through caring, in-depth Bible study, available to all.

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A “Sea of Blue” on My Bookshelf

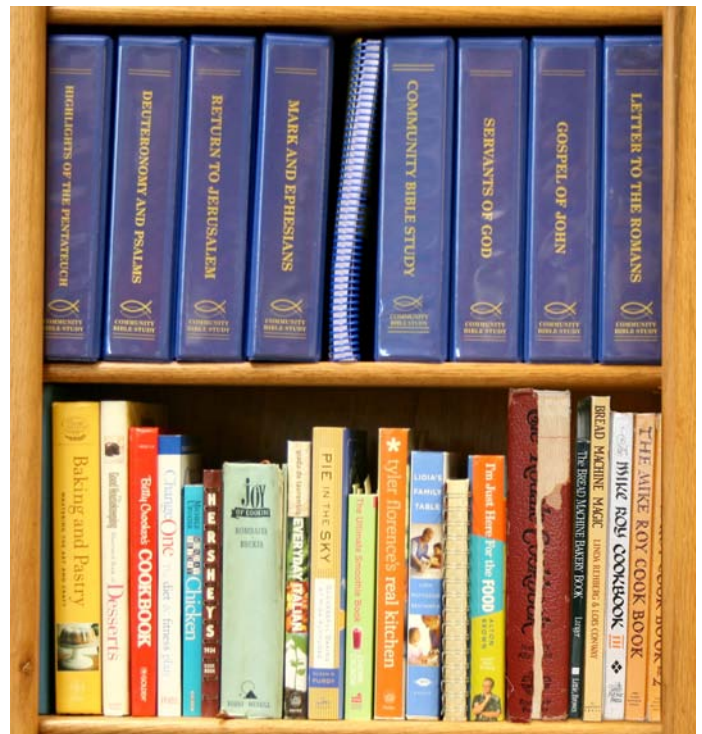
I was so excited to bring home the bookcase I commissioned my brother to make. Finally I could store my collection of CBS studies in its proper spot. I also had space planned for the new, big 3-ring notebooks I would collect in future studies. Placing them all together on the shelf reminded me of a sea of blue, which far out-shone the cookbooks and other educational books on the shelf below. Originally I had planned for them to rest on the bottom shelf, but it's only fitting that studies in the Word of God would be placed at the top.

I rejoice in the 10 years I have been able to stay with the CBS group in Newaygo County and pray there are many more years to follow. My “sea of blue” is just a hard copy of the content I have been soaking in these past years, but my life shows how I have been bathed and cleansed in the truth of God's Word. **CBS has shown me how to study God's Word and, most importantly, has held me accountable to actually do the study, and complete it with joy and eagerness.**

I had to laugh when class started up in the fall and I was handed a skinny, spiral book. CBS had changed the big bulky notebooks for small, bright spirals. I am totally happy with the change; now I can fit even more studies on my shelf. This change comes at an interesting time—my last large, blue notebook marks the year I transitioned out of a leadership role and into a Core Group.

I find that my CBS books become a personal journal as I fill the pages with notes of my joyous journey with Jesus. For this reason, I appreciate the extra blank pages that have been included. I will treasure my CBS study books, *always!* I am truly amazed at how God meets me where I am in my life. Whatever CBS study I am in, God shows me many relevant experiences, in various ways. What is truly, truly amazing, is that God does that for everyone who lets Him—always, continually. *“Come near to God and He will come near to you”* (James 4:8). Our God is a great, loving and personal God. The more I draw near, the more I want to learn, because He becomes so much more evident, so much more real, so much more personal.

CBS will always be a part of me, whether I am in a class or



The Sea of Blue

not. Throughout the years I plan to review all of the studies along with my notes taken, enabling me to relive and review the sweet memories I experienced with all my dear sisters in Christ. **CBS taught me a lot about prayer, since every facet of the ministry is based on prayer.** I am sure the Lord will continue to multiply the ministry many times over. It's exciting to witness and be a part of the growth. In the last year our Newaygo class has grown in all areas. Our home school section added a new teen class, and now, praise God, a men's class is meeting in the area.

I will always be grateful for the time God allowed me to be a part of CBS, and will always continue to pray for the ministry.

Nancy Graverson

*Previous Children's teacher, now early childcare volunteer
Newaygo County Day, MI*

Adopted Into God's Community

Community Bible Study is built on community, which in turn is built on relationships. We choose many of our relationships: our mate, our friends, and sometimes our neighbors and co-workers. But we have no choice about our physical relatives. Did you choose your parents, your siblings, or your cousins? No, God makes those relationship choices for us.

But, regardless of our immediate family members, all humans are born into the wrong family (the family of Adam), and the only way out is through adoption. Ephesians 1:5 says, "He predestined us to be adopted as His sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with His pleasure and will." God wants a relationship with us so much that He offers adoption to us even while we are flawed (Romans 5:8).

Some of us have the privilege of following that divine model—we are able to choose our children, through adoption. But, even in that choice, I believe that the God who orchestrates all things made the selections as He brought my husband and me our adopted children. God used our CBS Core Group to pray our daughter into our family after her birth parents abused and abandoned her. She came to us as a blue-eyed two-year-old on a mission to win our hearts, and she succeeded.

Our son was a very shy but mischievous 12-year-old redhead when he first came to join our family as a foster child. We started him in CBS classes soon after his arrival. He wasn't happy about going to the first class. But from that point on, he went willingly and happily, and he continued to attend throughout his teen years. **When he was 18, and child welfare officials asked him the reasons for his success as a high school graduate, without hesitation he answered that CBS was the reason for his success, and then he looked at me and added, "Oh, and my family."**

Not surprisingly, his answer prompted another question: "What is CBS?" My son happily answered, explaining the ministry of Community Bible Study and all it had done for him. I could not have been more proud of him and his reply.

Now he's 21 and in college. When I emailed him recently, asking him what he learned during his nine years in our family, I was a bit apprehensive about what his answer might be. I need not have been concerned. Here's his reply:

"This family taught me love and compassion. I learned compassion through your example: the ability to love and care for someone you may not know; your willingness to help my sister and me. This relates to how Jesus died for our sins. He showed great compassion that day. Every time I'm with the family I see His work in each individual. This family has taught me to sacrifice and put others before

myself. You two [adopted parents] made a sacrifice when you decided to have me in the family. You gave up your own freedom and lifestyle in order to show compassion for someone you hardly knew. Jesus sacrificed Himself, and now we must be a living sacrifice for Him."

This is what my son learned from growing up in God's community (Romans 12:1-2).

Nancy Campbell
Midland, Texas

Registration Form Triggers Inspiration

Filling in forms online often equals frustration, but Nancy Graverson shares with us the uplifting experience she had when trying out CBS's new online class registration:

This year I took the liberty to fill my registration out online. The questions were "big as life" on my computer screen, making them seem a bit more personal. What a different experience it was than seeing them on a small card. It actually surprised me a bit. I thought it would be fun to type in some of the answers that popped into my head.

- 1) I wrote that God is my emergency contact, the relationship is Christ, and I can call Him through prayer.
- 2) Ten years is not enough to study at CBS—I need many more—therefore how can I fill in that I have advanced Bible knowledge? I wonder if anyone does! I would consider myself always a medium level, since there is always more you can learn from the Bible.
- 3) How about for my experience? I condensed as much as I could to fit in the blank: 1) Children taught me; 2) Leadership taught boldness & humility for Christ.
- 4) My occupation = home Bible study, learning Scripture, lovingly supporting my husband, leading my family to best of my ability, for glory of God.
- 5) As for physical limitations = only my sin, but with Scripture I can tell Satan, "Away from me!"
- 6) Moving on in the work for God's kingdom = staying faithful to the work God has for me to do.

Sharing

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Please submit stories and
suggestions for *Sharing* to:
sharing@communitybiblestudy.org

Sharing Night—TCBS



I know many of you are in classes and you get to experience Sharing Day/Night. I have been in CBS for 19 years, and I just had one of the richest Sharing Nights I have ever experienced. I feel compelled to share with you what is happening in Teen CBS—you are all part of our class as you lead this ministry.

Our class is truly “community”—public school, private school, homeschool kids, church and non-church, plus a huge range socio-economically. The night started with a wrap-up of Genesis, and then I gave the ABCs (audible, brief, Christ-centered) of sharing. The teens were engaged, prepared, and ready to share. The first few shared how Teen CBS keeps them “grounded” with God. But then, after an awkward silence, the Holy Spirit moved, and here is some of what was shared:

“My family does not go to church, so this is all new to me. I really like CBS because Genesis has taught me that God is in control.”

“When we learned about Joseph, I knew I could trust God with everything.”

“My dad was diagnosed with cancer, and Genesis has taught me that God can even work that out for good in our family.”

“My parents made me come, but now I make them bring me every week!”

“Genesis is full of messed-up people, just like me, and God still cared about them and was patient with them.”

“I can trust my leader with anything.”

“Teen CBS was my favorite thing about high school.”

And, finally, I received this email from one of our students. I read it to our Leaders and I told them, as I sincerely tell you: This letter is addressed to me, but it is written to all of us. Thank you for your tireless efforts in supporting and leading CBS. I am grateful to serve alongside you. To God be the glory, great things He has done!

Gayle Kelly
Teaching Director
Baltimore, MD, Teen CBS
CBS Board of Trustees

CBS Student Ministries

*Transforming lives through
the study of God's Word.*



Dear Mrs. Kelly,
Mrs. Kelly, thank you so much for creating this ministry opportunity for us. It's incredible to know that there is a team of adults working for us every week, whose sole motivation is to serve us and bring us closer to God. You and your team have not only been a great influence, but have also been a safety net of comfort and familiarity. It's clear how much you love this ministry.

As a member of the first class of TCBS to go all the way through the program since its beginning—from the 8th-grade mustard seed group to my current seniors group—I have to commend you on how far the TCBS chapter in Baltimore has come. I recall all the memories from the early days at Chestnut Ridge. Now look at it. The Bible study has outgrown its old venue and is now buzzing every week in a nice, big church, with a full worship band at the forefront. You should be very proud, and it's been a real pleasure for me to be a part of the growth process.

I look forward to meeting with Mr. Kirkley, my small-group leader, sometime soon to “graduate” from his class and talk to him as well. Thank you again for leading such an important ministry in my life. The weekly meetings with my small group have been excellent sources of accountability. They remind me about God when I lose my focus, and for that I'm really grateful. See you soon!

Sincerely,
Drew Tucker

Honored to Serve

As I drove home from yet another great night at Teen CBS, I thought of what an awesome tool our Lord (and His many faithful servants) created through this ministry.

I have been active in youth ministry all my life, but it has been through Teen CBS that we have been able to press on in the “great commission” of making disciples for Jesus Christ! Yes, through an in-depth Bible study made available to all. The power is in His Word, and I stand in awe as I watch His Word melt hearts, change minds, and refocus lives from brokenness to blessings.

What a great calling, what a great mission statement, what a great ministry. I am honored and humbled to serve with such an outstanding team of servants.

I know we are making a difference; I’ve seen it, and it’s beautiful. I’ve seen it in Robert, an unchurched, high school dropout who was in trouble with the law. He gave His life to Jesus Christ through Teen CBS in April 2005. He was killed by a hit-and-run driver in August 2005. I praise God that we know where he is.

We have seen God’s hand all over this ministry; there have been so many miracles that I can barely keep track. We need to share our stories and keep encouraging each other, lifting each other up. After all, this is the **“Year of the Student”!**

*Joanne Scholl
Teaching Director
Crystal Coast, NC, Teen CBS*

Wow. Can you believe it’s May already? It’s time to finish up the last study and pack away the name tags for another year! As we all head into warmer weather, summer vacations, and time off with family, please keep your CBS family in your prayers. Specifically, here’s a few things you can pray for:

1. This month, five new prayer groups are forming in Texas (2), Nevada (1), Georgia (1), and Michigan (1). Would you pray for these teams as they seek God’s will in prayer?
2. This month, many of your Teaching Directors are receiving their lesson books for next year. Please pray for their time, wisdom, and perseverance as they begin their preparation for next year’s classes.
3. At the Ministry Service Center, copy deadlines for new studies have passed and print contracts are underway for next year’s studies. Please pray for all the summer’s logistical details that will culminate in your study book being in your hands in the fall.
4. With classes across the country taking a break, the summer months can be lean ones for the ministry financially. Please pray for generous financial gifts to continue to come in during the summer and, if the Lord lays it on your heart, please remember CBS in your summer giving plans.

[To make an online gift, click here.](#)



Camilla Seabolt
Executive Director

A Personal Word from Camilla ...

“One generation will commend Your works to another; they will tell of Your mighty acts” (Psalm 145:4). I have just returned from a one-day trip to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Sulphur Springs, Texas, Day Class. It was a glorious occasion of looking back at all the Lord has accomplished, and looking forward to God’s plan for the future.

The host pastor commented that God has used CBS to transform their community—population 14,000. The city’s newspaper had a *front-page* article about the celebration.

The class leaders made a video filled with testimonies of lives changed through in-depth study of the Word of God. At the reception following their Sharing Day, the participants’ ages ranged from 97 years young to early elementary age, with teenagers and many other adults in between. Three teenagers shared their personal testimonies in the video. Powerful! I talked with students whose lives have been changed—some as early as age two. This is the **Year of the Student** in CBS, and I was blessed as I met with and listened to these students of God’s Word.

Before I left the office in Colorado Springs I looked on our data base to see just how many people (not counting children) had been involved in the Sulphur Springs Day Class and Evening Class. I was astounded to realize that more than 565 had been active participants. That number reflects only those we actually have in our records.

I love that Community Bible Study goes into small towns and is available to communities. When the leaders and class members pray, trust, and reach outside their comfort zones, anything is possible. One generation has indeed declared the mighty works of the Lord to the next generation, and on and on it will go into the future. It is all to the glory of God! You can be excited about Community Bible Study all over the world, because lives are being transformed by the Word of God! What a privilege to serve Him with you.

Camilla

Please submit *Sharing* article suggestions to
sharing@communitybiblestudy.org.

