

STUDY GUIDE

SIX SESSIONS

**NO**

Kat  
Armstrong

**MORE**

**HOLDING**

**BACK**

Emboldening  
Women to Move  
Past Barriers,  
See Their Worth,  
and Serve God  
Everywhere

# NO MORE HOLDING BACK

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SIX SESSIONS

Emboldening Women to Move  
Past Barriers, See Their Worth,  
and Serve God Everywhere

Kat Armstrong



W PUBLISHING GROUP

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# CONTENTS

*A Message from Kat* ..... 5  
*How to Use This Guide* ..... 7

## PART 1:

### *The Messages Holding Women Back*

**Session 1:** Why Are You Even Here?..... 11  
**Session 2:** Stay in Your Place ..... 19

## PART 2:

### *The Call to Love God*

**Session 3:** All Your Heart ..... 41  
**Session 4:** All Your Soul..... 57  
**Session 5:** All Your Mind..... 71  
**Session 6:** All Your Strength ..... 89

*Leader's Guide* ..... 113  
*Appendix* ..... 115  
*Endnotes* ..... 123  
*About the Author* ..... 125

# A MESSAGE FROM KAT

*E*verything changed when my friend Becky invited me to join her small group Bible study. At first I refused, citing the fact that people who “study” the Bible were strange. But, thankfully, she was persistent. She couldn’t wait to share her friends and her Jesus with me.

Hesitant and suspicious, I finally surrendered after she showed up at my house unannounced to make the ask face-to-face. How could I refuse her? She’d made the ultimate sacrifice: fighting Houston traffic while driving across the city to pick me up. That’s what Houstonians call true love.

Becky was right, of course. I needed the help of the group to learn how to love God and love others. Lessons I could only understand in the context of community. Because it was safe to ask questions and struggle with the mysteries of God.

I’ve often wondered what life would be like now had Becky not ushered me into a relationship with God and the community of faith. That’s why I’ve been on my knees praying for you. Because I know firsthand the profound impact of opening your Bible to find the one true living God who’s eager to embrace you.

Maybe it’s been a long time since you’ve read the Scriptures. Maybe you are processing church hurt. Maybe somewhere along the way the passion you felt for God has morphed into caution or doubt. No matter where you are on your spiritual journey, God is waiting with open arms. Trust him this time. Trust him, again.

Love,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Kate Bushong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large, prominent "K" and "B".



# HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

## *Group Size*

Even God is in community—with himself, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. That’s why the *No More Holding Back* video curriculum was designed to be experienced while linking arms with other women. Ideally, your group will be four to six women but if your group is larger than six women, consider breaking into smaller groups for the discussion time. By including videos, notes, discussion questions, and personal study, this guide could be used in a home, at a church, or even over a quick meal before work or during your lunch break.

## *Resources*

For this study you will need the *No More Holding Back* video or digital study and enough study guides for each person in your group. Each video is only 15 minutes long. Although it’s not required, to enjoy the recommended reading in each session you also will need the *No More Holding Back* book.

## *Group Discussion*

I struggle to find margin in my full schedule, even for the things that are the most important to me. That’s why I think working through the material with a group could be the accountability we all need. Each session begins with a group discussion; you’ll also notice time estimations

throughout the material that indicate the length of time for each portion. I hope that helps you manage your time well while still leaving room for the Holy Spirit to direct your conversation. **Set aside approximately 60–90 minutes each time you gather your group.** Each part of the group time includes suggested time cues to keep your group on track and considerate of everyone's schedules. Check out *Loving Your Community Well* in the appendix for tips for great discussion time.

## *Personal Study*

The personal study sections are meant to be completed between video and group session meetings. Each personal study section is intended to be approximately 45 minutes of total individual study time divided into three 15-minute segments. It's up to you if you want to work through the material one part at a time over the course of a few days or all in one sitting. Do what's best for your schedule and learning style. I didn't include any personal study homework for session 1, because I think your time would best be spent getting to know the other women in your group, even if you've been together for years. Those relationships are key.

## *Group Leaders*

Taking the initiative to lead a group is sacred work that will be challenging *and* rewarding. I've been leading small groups for twenty years and I can say with confidence, you can do this. Why? Because *God* equips the people *he* calls by the power of *his* Spirit. The suggested time cues will help you keep your group time efficient and effective. Take a moment to read through the leader's guide in the back; it was designed to support you.



**PART ONE**

**THE MESSAGES  
HOLDING  
WOMEN BACK**



# ONE

## WHY ARE YOU EVEN HERE?

### Group Time

*Leader read Kat's message to group:*

It's no accident that your attention is here for the moment. Cast aside those nagging fears that you won't give this study the time it deserves, and you should just quit while you're ahead. Reject the notion that this can wait. Because now is always the right time to reconnect with God. Plus, he's been patiently waiting to embrace you. Let his unconditional love override the normal apprehensions that accompany starting something new. Embrace this fresh start with gusto. God has carved out this space just for you.

With that in mind, welcome to Bible study!

## Start with Prayer (2 minutes)

Before you launch, take a moment to start with group prayer. This would be a good time to invite the Holy Spirit to guide your group discussion and personal study time. The Bible teaches that there is one true living God who eternally exists in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. And Jesus taught that the Holy Spirit is the Great Teacher (John 14) who would help us all reach our full potential. Since God has made a way for us to experience life-change through the Holy Spirit's power, go ahead and call on the Spirit in prayer. Ask God to teach everyone new things about himself through the Word of God.

## Build Community (15 minutes)

You're in this together. So, use this time to go around the circle and have everyone introduce themselves and share why they wanted to be a part of this study by answering these questions:

- What brought you to this group?
- What do you hope to get out of this study?

## Scripture Reading

*Have one person read the following passage aloud:*

### **MARK 12:28–34 NIV**

One of the teachers of the law came and heard them debating. Noticing that Jesus had given them a good answer, he asked him, “Of all the commandments, which is the most important?”

“The most important one,” answered Jesus, “is this: ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ The second is this: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”

“Well said, teacher,” the man replied. “You are right in saying that God is one and there is no other but him. To love him with all your heart, with all your understanding and with all your strength, and to love your neighbor as yourself is more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices.”

When Jesus saw that he had answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” And from then on no one dared ask him any more questions.



## Watch Session 1 Video (15 minutes)

### *Video Notes*

God did not design half of his priorities for women and the other half for men.

Some of the messages we hear in church hold women back from loving God with our all.

## Group Discussion (25 minutes)

*If your group is larger than six people, split up into smaller groups for discussion time.*

1. Why do you think loving God with our hearts and souls is usually considered women's work and loving God with our minds and strength considered men's work?
2. According to the Mark passage read earlier, what are the two greatest priorities Jesus prescribes for the Christian life?
3. Who in your life lives out these priorities well? What is it about their life that reveals their priorities align with Jesus'?
4. In the video, the professor said, "Don't stop. Don't ever stop. Keep going sister of the faith." Who in your life encourages you to follow Christ? What do they say to you that is helpful?
5. What's the message holding you back from loving God with your all?
6. Metaphorically speaking, what would it look like to raise your hand more at church, school, at home, and/or work?

## Ask God for Help (2 minutes)

While everyone in your group may have different reasons for joining this study, God is able to meet all of our needs: *“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus”* (Philippians 4:19 NIV, italics added).

Take a moment to write a prayer to God asking him to accomplish the intentions you have for the group discussion and personal study time.



## End in Prayer (2 minutes)

Before you end group time, take a few minutes to thank God for the Scriptures and the timeless truths they provide to us in any and every circumstance. Ask God to help each group member to be all-in for Jesus, holding nothing back from him.

## Activity

This week you won't have any personal study material because I'm hoping you will meet with one person in your group and get to know her better. Maybe your group has been together for years and you are way past a first-name basis. Even so, taking this week and intentionally spending time one-on-one with a group member is your homework.

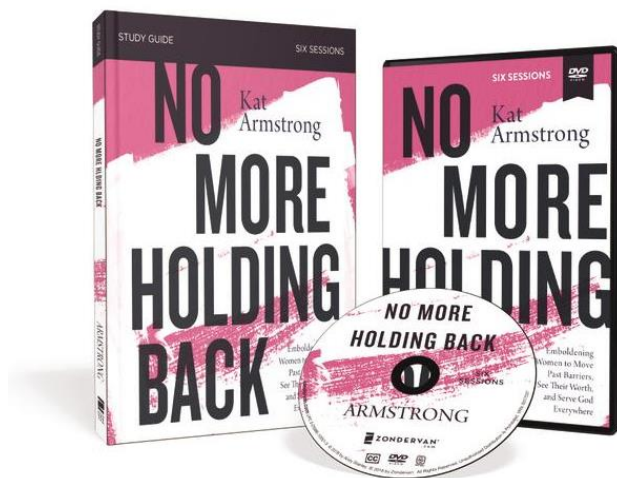
## Preview

*Leader read next week's preview to group:*

Next time your group meets, we will address the obstacles many women face when they seek to apply the Scriptures to their lives. Messages like these: women are easily deceived, find their significance in marriage and motherhood, are too much to handle, and don't have a lot to offer God. We don't want to walk away from this study in a few weeks and just know more *about* the Great Commandment. We want to absorb God's truths and live them out! Before we can ask, "What does this Bible verse mean?" we have to ask ourselves if there is anything keeping us from absorbing the material in the first place.

**Suggested Reading in**  
*No More Holding Back:*

*Introduction: Why Are You Even Here?*



## No More Holding Back

by Kat Armstrong

**“Don’t be afraid. Just give me your everything.”**

When Jesus told us to *love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, strength* (Mark 12:30), did he mean it one way for men and another way for women?

Through heartfelt biblical teaching, Kat Armstrong challenges the way our church culture has limited the terms of Jesus’ command to the perceived strengths of each gender. She dares to ask and explore what faith and life in general would look like if we broke through the barriers holding us back and lived giving Jesus our *ALL*.

In this six-session video Bible study, Kat offers a fresh perspective of encouragement that aligns with Scripture from beginning to end: “Don’t be afraid. Give me your everything.” She urges women to wholeheartedly love the Lord *beyond* our heart and soul, as well as with our mind and strength. If you have ever felt challenged or insecure following your dreams, or in your career, or in your personal pursuit of God, this is your study. Dare to answer his invitation to show up daily, holding nothing back.

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