

The Heart of Discipling Women

GUIDEBOOK



HEART TRACK

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In the stories told throughout the book, all names have been changed.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

What would happen if we put a discipleship spin on 1 Corinthians 13:1-3? Consider...

Though I have the best follow-up plans and have memorized the entire Bible, if I don't have love, I have...

Nothing.

And though I have the wisdom of Solomon and can answer any questions, someone may ask me, if I don't have love, I have...

Nothing. I'm like an obnoxious noise that irritates everyone around me.

Even if I wear myself out for over forty years discipling women, and sacrifice all I have for the advance of God's kingdom, if I don't have love, I gain...

Nothing.

Once when Jerry Bridges was speaking, he had us draw a bunch of zeros across a page, then asked how much they were worth. It didn't matter if you had one or a billion zeros; they were all worth nothing.

Then he told us to put a one to the left of the zeros. He shared that “one” represented love. Love gives value to everything we do.

And one zero with the number “one” in front of it has a greater value than a zillion zeros without it!

When we talk about the heart of discipling women, love is foundational.

If you search on Amazon for 'discipleship,' you will find many books, programs, and resources. There are many different ways to disciple someone. But discipleship is similar to the human body – without the heart, there will be no life. But get the heart, and there sure is a lot of leeway for what will keep that body going.

Two years ago, Jean Fleming joined me on an adventure exploring what the heart of discipling women can look like. We found that, similar to a diamond, there are many facets. For a school year, we met with staff in the Rocky Mountain Region as we dove into examining twenty-five of these, which we organized into four collections. The library we compiled of videos, tools, and resources can be found on the Collegiate Navigator website under Resources.

In this first book, we examine:

A Heart That Follows Jesus

A Heart That Listens

A Heart That Is Humble

A Heart That Hopes

A Heart That Is Patient

A Heart That Worships

A Heart That Perseveres

Jean has recorded twenty-one videos related to these topics that are pure gold. In this book, you will find Bible studies and resources to help you keep growing at a heart level.

Jean will be the first to tell you she's still growing. Wait till you hear her share the heart of a learner in the third collection! But that is foundational for being Jesus' disciple – following and learning from him.

And sharing the journey with others is like Miracle-Gro for our souls.

I will never forget the day Jean Fleming contacted me and said, "The Lord has put you on my heart. I want to start meeting with you." What a gift this has proven to be. Each time we talk, she calls me higher, and I leave hungry to go deeper with Jesus. She is eighty-three and still meets one-on-one with women. Through her videos, you'll have an opportunity to experience Proverbs 13:20 "Those who walk with the wise grow wise."

But don't stop there. This book is set up so you can take the plunge and dive into God's Word with a friend. Each of the seven facets included in this collection comes with the following:

A True Discipleship Story – Why? People remember things when they are emotionally connected to a story. Your mind is the rational part of your brain. All too often, in discipleship, it is easy to pass on facts and techniques. But when the treasure is shared in the context of a story, it doesn't flit through the brain but has the opportunity to penetrate the heart, where it is more like to have a lasting impact. Stories are included in this book to demonstrate what this can look like. But a story shared in the context of a relationship - where women know the person the story is about (you!) can often be even more impactful! You are encouraged not to skip over these stories but to read them with Jesus, asking what he wants to say through them. Do you have a similar story to tell? You might discover these stories to be the most helpful portions of the library, especially if they spur you on to share more of your stories as you disciple women!

Quiet Time – Whenever I share a quiet time with a friend, it always takes our time deeper. This is a focused time of listening to the Lord to hear what He wants to say through the Scriptures. I've included an article on the Treasure of Shared Quiet Times that explains how I do this with women.

Time In God's Word – These bible studies are not designed to be comprehensive but to allow you to dive into the Scriptures and hear what the Lord says about each heart aspect. You can do them independently and then come together to share or work through them together. But getting into the Scriptures as you share your journey will take your time to a different level.

Creatively Process

– taking time to creatively PROCESS helps truth go from our heads to our hearts where it's more likely to be transformational, helping us become more like Jesus

Think of this book as a potluck. Some dishes you won't want to miss, others you might pass on. Ask Jesus to guide you! But don't hesitate to dive in and enjoy with a friend.

When we talk about the heart of discipling women, we define this as an intentional, Christ-centered presence to encourage and equip women to follow Jesus for a lifetime and help others do so.

We hope in these pages you will find encouragement and treasure to enrich your heart as you share the journey discipling women.



CHAPTER TWO

A Heart That Follows Jesus

“**E**xcusez moi! Could you help?”

I looked to my right. A petite brunette sat on the grass, a summer course schedule spread before her, not an unusual sight the first day of classes at Florida State in 1984. What was uncommon was her accent.

“I do not understand . . .” She waved her hand over the newsprint, and explained she was an exchange student from France, looking for an elective class.

After I showed her how to navigate the schedule, I continued to the library, my backpack loaded. I needed to write.

Throughout my sophomore year, I took graduate-level creative writing courses where the instructor required publication to receive an A. After two semesters of B+, I was determined to finish the children’s

book I was writing. I figured four hours of writing every day for a month would do the trick.

As I stepped through the sliding glass doors into the first-floor stacks, I heard a voice inside my head (I realize that sounds strange, but it was clear as anything). “Look around, Deb. Do you think the world needs one more meaningless book?”

Glancing around, I noted library shelves packed with books from floor to ceiling.

“Maybe not . . . ?” I answered. In truth, I hadn’t been writing for the glory of God. I just wanted to get published.

“I don’t want you to write. I want you to go outside and spend time with that student.”

“But what if she’s not there?” I protested.

“She will be if you go now.”

I headed outside and saw her gathering her things. She stood to leave as I approached.

“Did you find a class?” I asked.

“Yes.” She nodded, “I am going to take Introduction to the Old Testament.”

“Really?” On the spot, I decided to join her. “I’m taking that, too.”

“You are?” She was thrilled.

“I’m Celine*,” she offered as we walked to the class, which started in fifteen minutes. I’d only been a Christian for a year and a half, so I expected this would be interesting.

The class was terrible! For two hours, the instructor explained away miracles, expostulated theories regarding the authorship of the Bible, and debunked the “myth” that God existed. Meanwhile, I was talking to Him.

I recently discovered James 1:5 in the Bible, “If any of you lacks wisdom he should ask of God who gives generously to all without

finding fault and it will be given to him.” “Oh, Lord! What is up with this class? I need wisdom! You’re obviously up to something, but this class is absurd. How do you want me to join in with what you’re doing?”

As soon as the class ended, Celine leaned over. “I could not understand a word he said. Would you teach me the Old Testament?”

So I did. For two hours each weekday, we attended that class, where neither of us understood much—Celine because of language difficulties, me because the content was so bizarre. I spent most of those two hours in class reading stories in the Old Testament so I’d be ready to share them afterward.

As soon as each class concluded, I spent the next two hours sharing stories from the Old Testament with Celine. She was auditing the course so she didn’t need to take any exams. There was no need to repeat the instructor’s crazy theories.

On the last day of the month, she asked, “So how does Jesus fit into all this?” After hearing an overview of the stories in the Old Testament and learning about the system of sacrifice, Jesus made perfect sense. When I finished telling her about Him, she asked, “Can I pray now to receive Him as my Savior?”

I knew then: Helping women come to know Jesus was what I wanted to spend my life doing.



CHAPTER THREE

The Treasure of Shared Quiet Times

I looked at the Bible with new eyes the day I entered into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The same words I'd muddled through, now came alive. I couldn't get enough. For hours I would sit and read as if I'd never read any of it before.

When I met Barb Choat, she challenged me, saying, "This is great Deb. But what will you do during midterm exams? Or after you get a job? Will you still take time for the Word? Or will you start to think, 'I don't have an hour today,' then end up skipping it? How much better it is to develop the discipline of taking one bite, chewing on it, and seeking to live it out every single day of your life. You can always read more later. A little dose daily will get you farther in the long run."

Thus began my adventure with shared quiet times. Right then and there Barb sat down, opened her Bible and gave me one of the best gifts I ever received!

Transformational Quiet Times

Now there are many ways to have a quiet time. Indeed, the words “quiet time” seem to be a catch-all for any activity: reading through the Bible, praying, or simply sitting quietly and listening. All of these activities are valuable, but what Barb shared with me has transformed my life more than any other spiritual discipline.

There are three components. I refer to them as Look, Listen, and Live It Out. Barb began by showing me her quiet time from the previous day so I could see this format, and then we dove in. We started together and finished together, but each completed most on our own with Jesus. As a result, I knew exactly what to do the next day. This also made it easy to share with other friends.

LOOK (focus)

First, we prayed, asking the Lord to open our eyes so we could see wonderful things in His word, and cried out to him for wisdom (James 1:5). We asked him to show us where he wanted us to focus. Next, we started reading aloud through Psalm 1 and stopped when a verse stood out to me.

LISTEN (meditate)

Then, we each wrote our verse at the top of a page, and separately began to record whatever thoughts came to mind. I remember writing

observations, pondering the meanings of different words, and asking God questions. Was I ever surprised when I wrote down what came to mind, and He took me in a direction I never expected!

LIVE IT OUT! (apply)

Next, (still individually) we asked the Lord: What do you want me to do in response to what I've just read? How do you want this lived out? What difference will knowing this make in my life? Then, we took time to share with each other the verse we selected, our best thoughts on it, and applications. We had a brief discussion about how we could help hold each other accountable. We concluded by praying for each other, especially asking for help to complete our applications.

Twenty-six years later, I'm still doing this with others.

Sharing with New Believers

Whenever a new friend enters into a relationship with Jesus, a shared quiet time is usually the first thing I do with her... and not just once! The first time I show her what to do by doing it with her. In the months that follow, we meet weekly to share a quiet time together and share highlights from the rest of our times alone with God that past week. This teaches her the skill and discipline of daily quiet time, and we learn so much from each other in the process.

I began having shared quiet times with my son when he was ten years old. He grew up seeing his father and I do this and he was curious. Could he do it too? He didn't write much – usually just the verse followed by a one-sentence thought and his application in a few

words as possible, but did this ever lay a foundation for his life. Today, he eagerly takes the initiative to share quiet times with his friends.

We never required him to do this; instead, I would occasionally ask him if he'd like to join me. Our shared quiet times sparked some great discussions, but the best part occurred as we grew together. He saw me daily seeking input from Jesus, receiving just what I needed, and my life being transformed in response to the Word. There is power in sharing your spiritual journey.

When teaching a new believer how to do this, it helps to meet weekly for several months. This format for having a quiet time can be quickly learned, but the motivation to acquire this daily discipline takes time to develop. It is not enough to merely cite verses on the importance of having a daily quiet time. A new believer needs first-hand experience interacting with the Lord and witnessing the life changing results from living out what He's teaching them. It is their changed life that provides the best motivation!

How many people start exercising daily after just being told it is important and shown once what to do?

Learning to Apply

Ron read his Bible every day. In fact, he read through the Bible every year. He did this for six years... until the day he left his wife and family to indulge his lust, fulfilling his deepest fantasies. Eventually he ended up divorced and in prison.

Can it be possible to be in the Word daily and it not impact your life?

According to James, the answer is yes! James gives us the picture of a person who looks at himself in a mirror then walks away forgetting what He has seen. He warns, “Do not merely listen to the word and deceive yourselves. Do what it says.” (James 1:22)

How can you deceive yourself as you read the Bible?

In Matthew 7, Jesus tells the story of two men. Both heard the word. Both had houses that looked great. Both faced a storm. There was one key difference – what they did in response to what they heard. The wise man put into practice what he heard, and it laid a solid foundation for his life. The foolish man heard and did nothing.

Can’t you just picture, “I have a quiet time every day. I’m so spiritual.” and then boom, down crashes the house! The foolish man may have even had a bigger and better house than the wise man before the storm! He was deceived into thinking that because he spent all that time hearing the Word he was secure.

Applying what you are reading is so vital. But this doesn’t come naturally. It takes time to learn how to intentionally do this.

Recently I met with a student and asked what she did for her quiet time. “I usually read a few chapters in the Bible and write down notes about the things that stand out to me.” When I asked her how she was doing applying what she was reading she replied, “Not very good. I just never know what to do.” Too big a bite can choke you! After we shared a quiet time together where we meditated on one verse, she

found it much easier to apply. It wasn't anything huge, but did it ever impact her life.

A good way to begin is to encourage them to do an application they can accomplish in five minutes within the next 24 hours. Remember, they are learning a new life skill and a new discipline. You don't tackle a marathon your first time running. As Jesus said in Luke 16:10, "He who is faithful in a very little thing will also be faithful in much." (NAS)

As we get together weekly, she sees how I apply the word to my life. This "picture," along with seeing the results in my life, is helping her learn how to apply what she hears and reads. Granted, this means I need to diligently apply what I'm reading.

About a year ago I went back through my quiet time notebook to highlight the applications I'd completed. This was humbling. So, in January, I purchased a calendar and used each day's box to record my application, checking it off when completed. Each Sunday I would take time to evaluate how wise I'd been the previous week. As a result, I started to complete more of my applications – and was astounded at the transformation effected in my life.

Developing the discipline

This past semester I began meeting with three freshmen girls. All of them came from Christian homes and knew about quiet times but

they were vague on specifics. Don't assume because someone knows the term that they also know what to do – or are doing it.

After sharing a quiet time, I encouraged them to take what we did and do it daily on their own. All three began intermittently. Each week as we met, we camped out in a different Psalm. I would take them to special places in Scripture where I knew they could easily find treasure applicable to their lives.

Eventually, I started them in Colossians, encouraging them to pick up the next day where we'd left off and start working their way through this book (or another of their own choosing) on their own. Not one of them did this, so I started our next shared quiet time where we'd stopped in this book the previous week. I always begin our times together, asking where they are reading in their quiet times. This lets me know how frequently they are having quiet times on their own, and whether they started working through a book sequentially.

After a month, one of the girls started working her way through the book of Mark on her own – and was soon hooked! Up to this point, Jesus had been in the background of her life. Now He took center stage, and it showed. As soon as I learned she was working her way through a book, all three of us began having our weekly quiet time wherever she happened to be. This kept her on track and gave the others a taste of reading sequentially.

Week after week, this student shared how she was experiencing Jesus meeting her where she “just happened” to be. It wasn't long till her application was to have a quiet time every day. She shared, “It really

is making a difference in my life when I do this. I don't want to miss out!"

As soon as someone understands the format, I encourage them to pass this treasure on to another friend. If you really want to learn something, teach it to another person. You don't have to know much, and this method is very easy to reproduce. I encourage them to "do with a friend what you did with me." There is always much excitement when they return and share what happened. Plus, as they start encouraging others to have quiet times, it keeps spurring them on in their own new-found discipline.

Wise Use of Time

And the beauty of this method is that it doesn't take much time. It can be done in as little as fifteen minutes – just inviting a friend over for coffee in the morning, in the break room before the day at the office starts, or during lunch at a park.

Recently I was visiting a friend who was struggling to adjust to life with a newborn. Getting up at all hours of the night had demolished her previous schedule. As a result, she was spending very little time in the Word. She was exhausted, discouraged, and feeling overwhelmed. But after we shared a quiet time together, there was joy! This was a gift better than any baby gift, advice, or even sympathy I could give her. As she came into the presence of the living God, sitting at his feet listening, it nourished her hungry soul.

And mine too. As we shared the treasure he laid on our hearts, the depth of our sharing became so precious. Even when meeting with old

friends, if we take time to dive into the Word together, doing this at the start helps us connect at a heart level and make the most of the rest of our time.

This really is an excellent way to spur friends on, new as well as old, deepening your relationship with God and each other. In Matthew 18:20 Jesus says, “Where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them.” Can you imagine the joy this must bring Him?

Enjoying Jesus

Never forget, this is not a discipline to be checked off, but time intended to be enjoyed with the lover of your soul. Don’t only read the Word; interact with the author! He is always there, so close and so eager to communicate with you.

This can take place anywhere in His Word, “All scripture is God-breathed and useful” (2 Timothy 3:16). About 15 years ago I decided to put this to the test having daily quiet times as I gradually worked my way through the entire Bible. It took me three years following this format –reading until a verse stood out to me and stopping to camp there. I was amazed at how many times where I was reading “just happened” to be exactly what I needed that day!

Many days I begin with a verse and have no idea why the Lord highlighted it or how it will be useful that day. But when I hear God’s thoughts on it – wow! Does His living Word ever come alive. Each time I experience Him like this I can’t help but draw closer. I feel so loved! What a life-changing communicator He is. Every quiet time,

no matter how short or long, should be a shared quiet time with the Lord.

Passing It On

A friend recently asked me, “My mom wants to start discipling younger women. Do you have any suggestions?” The best advice I can give is to start sharing quiet times with people. It’s the most effective way I know to spur another person on and get them established in their walk with Jesus. It’s not difficult to do. Even if this is all you do that first year, it can change their life.

Ten years ago, Barb Choat went home to be with the Lord, but what she passed on to me continues to impact my life every single day. It is also impacting the lives of many others as I keep passing this treasure on...and they pass the treasure on... I am so thankful she shared that first quiet time with me.



CHAPTER FOUR

Shared Quiet Time

1 2 Now when he heard that John had been arrested, he withdrew into Galilee. 13 And leaving Nazareth he went and lived in Capernaum by the sea, in the territory of Zebulun and Naphtali, 14 so that what was spoken by the prophet Isaiah might be Fulfilled: 15 “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles— 16 the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.” 17 From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.” 18 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19 And he said to them, “Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him. 21 And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them. 22

Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.²³ And he went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. ²⁴ So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, those having seizures, and paralytics, and he healed them. ²⁵ And great crowds followed him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.

Matthew 4:12-23 (ESV)

LOOK: (*Read the passage above and write below the one verse that stands out to you*)

LISTEN: (*Record below your observations and any thoughts that come to mind as you consider this verse. Dialogue with Jesus about it, asking Him any questions you might have and recording below whatever thoughts come to mind*)

LIVE IT OUT: *How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to this? Is there something you can praise Him for? Or thank Him for? Is there something He is laying on your heart to do as a result of this time you've enjoyed with Him? Record this below.*



CHAPTER FIVE

Time In God's Word

A HEART THAT FOLLOWS JESUS

*“Come, follow me.” Jesus said,
“and I will make you fishers of men.”*

Matthew 4:19 (NIV84)

1. Read Matthew 4:18-23 circling every time you see the word **follow** or followed.

¹⁸ As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁹ “Come, follow me,” Jesus said, “and I will send you out to fish for people.” ²⁰ At once they left their nets and followed him.

²¹ Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, ²² and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

²³ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people. ²⁴ News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed; and he healed them. ²⁵ Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea and the region across the Jordan followed him.

What do you observe?

Where did these interactions occur?

Who followed Jesus?

Why do you think they did?

2. What picture comes to mind when you think of the word “follow?”

Take a moment to draw the picture on a piece of paper (*stick figures count! ;0)*

3. If you have access to the Blue Letter Bible on your phone or laptop it is fascinating to look up this verse in Greek - start with Matthew 4:19, then at the top click where it says Interlinear/concordance, scroll down until you find the word **follow** and write the word and the definition below.

What picture comes to mind when you consider Jesus' invitation to follow is really "Come behind me?" How does this relate to the picture you drew?

Now go to Matthew 4:20 and look up the Greek definition for **follow**. What do you observe?

Now look up the word "followed" in **Matthew 4:25**, what do you discover?

4. In what ways were Peter and Andrew, James and John's response **similar** to the crowds?

5. In what ways was Peter and Andrew, James and John's response to Jesus **different** from the crowds'?

6. Have you ever had to leave anything to follow Jesus?

If yes, please share the story! Or Is there something you sense Jesus calling you now to leave to follow Him?

7. According to Jesus' invitation in **Matthew 4:19**, what is **Jesus' part** and what is **our part**? (If you want to have fun look up the Greek word for "make.")

8. What does Jesus **promise** in this verse?

9. The words "I will make" are actually very powerful coming from God! They occur 110 times in the Bible. For example, in **Genesis 2:18** when God declares, "it is not good for man to be alone I will

make a helper suitable for him” and in **Genesis 2:12** when God invites Abraham to leave his country and his family and follow Him, He says “And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great and you shall be a blessing.” (NIV)

What thoughts come to mind as you consider this?

10. How does this **connect** with your life?



CHAPTER SIX

Creatively Process

DRAWING HIGHLIGHTS

Have you ever spent time with the Lord and later in the day, struggled to recall what you read? Been there. Experienced that. Many times.

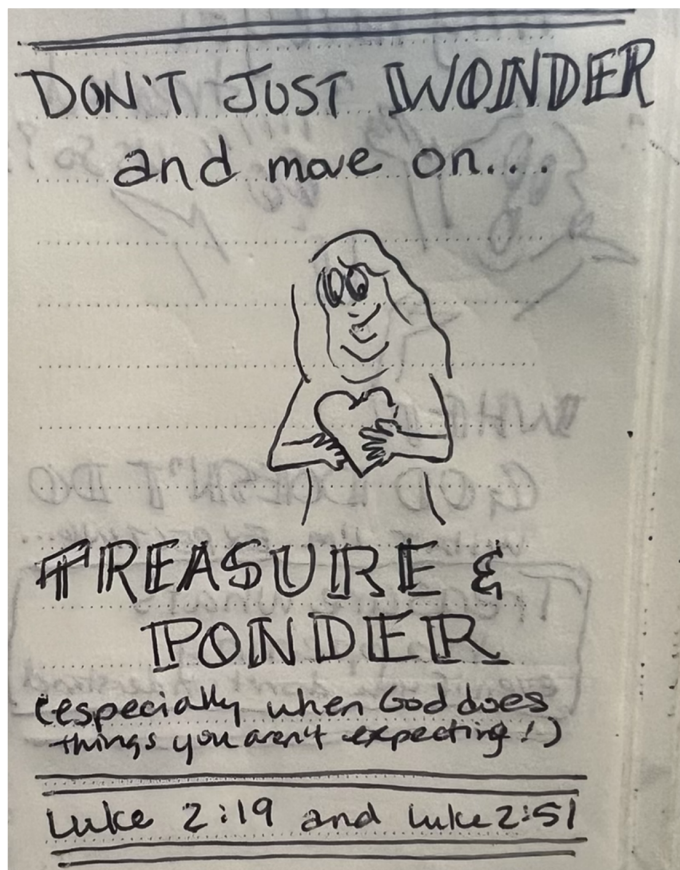
One thing that helps me REMEMBER is drawing a quick picture. It doesn't have to be fancy. Stick figures count. It doesn't have to take a lot of time. Even a thirty-second quick sketch involves the opposite side of your brain. I am amazed at how much more I retain from my quiet times when I do this.

But even more, I find taking time to creatively PROCESS helps truth go from my head to my heart where it's more likely to be transformational, helping me become more like Jesus. Proverbs 23:7 tells us "As a man thinks in his heart so he is." Our goal shouldn't be to acquire information but life change. Truth needs to reach our hearts for that.

Creatively processing for me is also a way to TREASURE God's word. When I sense the Lord is highlighting something for me I don't

want it to go in one ear and out the other. These are gifts. Purposeful gifts. God has a reason for everything He communicates.

What does it look like for your to treasure something?



Each week we'll explore different (fun!) ways of creatively processing what the Lord has highlighted for us during our times with him and each other. Some processes are more involved than others. But bottom line – simple, quick sketches work!

When I meet with women, I ask at the end of our time what the Lord highlighted for her. This can be something from our shared quiet time or time in God's Word, a tool that was passed on or a new idea or thought.

It is so helpful for me to hear what stood out to her and as we discuss our highlights it helps to process even more.

I find this interaction is taken to a deeper level when we creatively process together. This can be as simple as a thirty-second drawing that we share with each other. I like to bring blank index cards or small pieces of card stock for us to draw on.

It's amazing how this helps me capture, process, remember and treasure at least one key thing the Lord has blessed me with. And when I do, the blessing doesn't stop there. I like to put the card where I can see it throughout the week. This helps me keep responding to what Jesus has so graciously communicated to me.

MATERIALS

Two 3x5 cards, blank (or Cardstock)

Two pens

INSTRUCTIONS:

DRAW a quick 30-second picture illustrating the main treasure you received during the time shared.

SHARE your pictures with each other.

PRAY thanking Jesus for these gifts He's blessed you with.

p.s. If you go on Instagram and type in @truthtreasurer you will find examples of how I do this.



CHAPTER SEVEN

A Heart That Listens

It's the fourth day of our Spring break ski trip. With no snow in the forecast, we are taking the morning to let the students enjoy time with Jesus. I am eager to get to know this new student who's followed her boyfriend to Navs. When I first met Robin* she shared she'd spent the summer interning as a church youth leader.

"Would you like to get together and share a quiet time?"

"Sure!" Robin bounced across the room and plopped down on the bed next to me as the rest of the students headed to cozy corners in the cabin or outside seeking warm spots in the sun.

I was praying big time for snow!

"What do you usually do when you spend time with the Lord?"

She shrugged her shoulders, "I just read whatever."

"Would you like for me to show you what I do when I enjoy time each morning with Jesus?"

“Sure!”

“Do you have a notebook?” She grabbed one out of her backpack.

“How about we start in the book of Psalms?” I turn to Psalm 1.

“I love songs!” Robin is a gifted musician. She brought her guitar and serenaded us each evening while my deaf ears followed along as I read the lyrics on her laptop.

I shared with her how I use the format Look, Listen, Live it out. And we wrote those words down the left margin of our notebooks, leaving spaces between them.

“Now in Isaiah 55 God says, ‘Listen, listen to me and eat what is good and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.’ God compares His Word to a feast. Think of a chapter of the Bible like a steak. What happens if you try to shove the whole thing in your mouth?”

Robin gagged, then pretended to pass out. What a ham.

“Exactly. You won’t get much nourishment there. But what happens if you cut off one bite and chew it well?”

“Mmm mm.” Malia smacked her lips. “You can really enjoy it. I love steak.”

“Me too. And you get the full benefit of all the nutrients.” I pointed down to my Bible. “So I read a passage of Scripture until one verse stands out and then stop there. That’s my bite! I write that verse down next to where it says, “Look” in my notebook the moment something catches my attention. I don’t keep reading because something else may stand out and I’ll have a hard time picking.”

Robin laughed. “I hate making decisions.”

“Me too. Next to the word “listen” I write down what caught my attention as I read the verse and then record whatever stands out to me. Sometimes I’ll write out questions asking Jesus about them, then

write what comes to mind and often I'm like, 'Woah. That didn't come from me.'

Robin raises her eyebrows. "Seriously?"

I nod, "This is about making space to actively listen to the Lord and hear whatever He wants to say to you through His Word."

Robin leaned forward.

"Then I always end my time asking Jesus, 'What do you want me to do in response?' It may be really simple - like giving Him thanks for something or praising Him for what I've learned about him, or he may lay on my heart to 'write a letter to someone' or give an idea for how I can repair a relationship. So I write whatever comes to mind next to where it says, Live It Out.

That's where this gets so exciting because as I do this day after day, even if I only have ten minutes, that's when I experience God speaking into my life in a way that can make a difference. But it only makes a difference if I do my part and respond."

Would you like to give it a try?"

She held her thumbs up. "You bet."

"Since we're doing this with Jesus, why don't we start by praying and asking him to bless this time?"

Robin prayed, "Hey God, we need snow. Could you please deliver?"

And I ask the Lord to bless our ears and let us hear whatever He wants us to. "Why don't we alternate reading verses in Psalm 1? You can read the first one. Then I'll read the next one. When a verse stands out to you put your pen down as a signal you've got your verse."

"Ok."

So Malia started reading, then I read. We go all the way through the Psalm. She never put her pen down.

I leaned closer to her. “Sometimes I need to read it again silently for a verse to stand out to me. Wanna try that?”

She nodded. So we re-read the Psalm to ourselves. After a few minutes of silence, I asked, “Was there a verse that caught your attention?”

“You know,” Robin shifted in her seat, “I’m having a hard time connecting with this Psalm.”

“Ok.” I turn to Psalm 23. There is so much treasure in that one, “Why don’t we go here? Did you like alternating reading verses? Some people prefer to read it all themselves or to hear someone else read it.”

“Why don’t you read it.” She suggests. So I do. Again, silence.

“I’m really not connecting with anything in there either.”

You better believe I asked Jesus for help. I’ve never had anyone not find a verse before and now we’re heading to a third passage?

So I flipped to Psalm 19. Soon as we read verse one, Robin exclaimed, “That’s it. That’s my verse.”

I heave a sign of relief. “Sweet. What stands out to you?”

“It kind of reminds me of this rock song I know that talks about stars...”. As she shared about the song, it dawned on me. I think she’s blind. Robin may be reading the scriptures but is spiritually blind to their intended meaning. She may have served as an intern in a church, but it appeared she didn’t yet know Jesus.

So while she took time to write down her verse and thoughts, I cried out to the Lord asking for wisdom to know how He wants me joining in with what He is doing. It’s not happenstance she is here on this trip or that I am getting this time with her.

After we finished sharing that quiet time together, I asked, “Robin, would you like to get together again and read a story of how Jesus interacted with a woman in the Bible?”

“I’d love that.”

A student burst into the room. "Come quick, you guys. Snow just started falling. God answered our prayers!"

Everyone inside raced out the door.

We got flurries that day. We danced and played. The next morning we woke to a winter wonderland perfect for skiing.

I looked up and smiled. The skies proclaimed the work of God's hands. By the end of the semester, Robin was no longer blind.



CHAPTER EIGHT

The Pressure's Off

Have you ever been to a Bible study where you watched a video or listened to a speaker talk and then broke into small groups and the facilitator presented a second message?

We live in a society that is information rich. At any moment of the day, you can pull up a sermon online or read a book or listen to a radio broadcast. We've never had more access to the Word being taught – and still struggled to live it out.

Consider what the Scriptures say:

“But you are not to be called Rabbi, for you have one teacher and you are all brothers.” Matthew 23:8

“Neither be called instructors, for you have one instructor – the Christ.” Matthew 23:10

“As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, abide in Him.” 1 John 2:27

Once someone is a believer their greatest need isn't for advice, but for someone to come along and help them learn how to listen to the Lord and help them process what they are hearing so they know how to respond and to encourage them to respond by living out what He is laying on their hearts. There are three key ways you can do this:

1. Modeling

Until the day we die, we are all very much in process, in need of growing and becoming more like Jesus. As you share your weaknesses, where you struggle, and what helps you, there is a tremendous opportunity for people to learn how to process and apply as they see you doing this. The quote, "More is caught than taught" is true. Whenever I'm asked to speak at a women's retreat or to a group I find it helpful to keep this in mind. My goal isn't to teach but to share my journey (even the ugly parts when it will be of help for them to hear) and what's helped me.

2. Listen & Ask Questions, Then Listen More

In James 1:19 we are instructed, "Everyone should be quick to listen..." This is important to remember when you are facilitating a group discussion. There is nothing like listening to someone share their heart or their thoughts to make them feel loved and cared for. This creates a wonderful environment where growth can happen.

And is the second part of that verse, "slow to speak..." ever key for facilitators to remember. When I speak I'm in control. So if I'm scared it's easy for that to be my default. If someone in the group asks a question, the natural response is to answer. But what a difference it can make to first ask if anyone else in the group would like to respond. Seek to create a learning community, where journeys are shared together. This is more powerful and life-changing than a quick answer given. You want to engage with each other as well as the material. Can that ever help people grow.

It can help to identify whether the women in your group are internal or external processors. Those who process externally are often first to share so sometimes the internal processors get left out. It requires extra intention to listen to them. It can help to provide opportunity for women to first process on their own and then listen and ask questions.

For example, when I'm facilitating a group discussion after a speaker has shared, I will often encourage women to first write down on a notecard what stood out to them in the message or draw a quick picture representing this. Even extroverts benefit from this opportunity to collect their thoughts (writing is also a form of external processing) so when they share, it tends to be more focused. This is key for "listening" to internal processors. Women who would never share in a group, often will when the group is conducted this way.

People are often helped more when we listen and ask questions than when answers are given.

3. Introducing different ways to process

Processing can be as simple as having your group draw a picture or write a word or short paragraph that summarizes the key thing that stood out to them either from the message heard or from their Bible study. If you read the scriptures together and then discuss, it can be helpful to give colored pencils and have them underline what stands out to them or circle key words. Or you can have the group art journal a page reflecting what they learned and then share it afterward. *(more information on this and examples are available at <http://www.restfulheart.wordpress.com>)*

These can help people focus and narrow down what was heard so they can come up with an application. This is where the rubber meets the road. It can be powerful when people process together to help

come up with an application and then provide an opportunity for accountability. This doesn't have to be like a drill sergeant checking you. Anticipating someone will ask "How did it go this week?" or "What did you experience as you sought to live out what you learned last week?" can be a powerful motivator.

The difference between the wise and foolish builder wasn't a matter of hearing the Word. The difference was what they did in response. The wise builder didn't get more gold stars. When he responded to what he heard and lived it out, he laid a solid foundation for when the storms of life came. And note it wasn't "If" they come but "when."

There are times when it is appropriate to give advice, but this needs to be filtered through Ephesians 4:29, speak "only what is helpful for building others up, according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." Ask – does this help them process what they've heard and move towards application? Or will I only give opportunity for them to "hear" more?

Whether you're meeting one on one or facilitating a group it can be wise to ask, "How much time am I talking?" And "What is happening as a result?"

Best part of this? Does it ever take the pressure off you as a facilitator, discipler or mentor. You don't need to have all the answers. And since no one does (according to I Corinthians 13:12 in this life we only know in part) what a relief. All you need to do is join in with what Jesus is doing, helping women learn to listen to him – not only to hear, but to respond and yield as He guides. In the process, instead of remaining babes dependent on you, they learn how to walk with him and abide with him for life!



CHAPTER NINE

Shared Quiet Time

A HEART THAT LISTENS

“Come, all you who are thirsty,
come to the waters;
and you who have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without cost.

Why spend money
on what is not bread,
and your labor on
what does not satisfy?
Listen, listen to me,
and eat what is good,
and you will delight

in the richest of fare.

Give ear and come to me;
listen, that you may live.

I will make an everlasting
covenant with you,
my faithful love promised
to David.

Isaiah 55: 1-3 (NIV)

LOOK: *(Read the passage above and write below the one verse that stands out to you)*

LISTEN: *(Record below your observations and any thoughts that come to mind as you consider this verse. Dialogue with Jesus about it, asking Him any questions you might have and recording below whatever thoughts come to mind)*

LIVE IT OUT: *How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to this? Is there something you can praise Him for? Or thank Him for? Is there something He is laying on your heart to do as a result of this time you've enjoyed with Him? Record this below.*



CHAPTER TEN

Time In God's Word

A HEART THAT LISTENS

1 . God's Invitation

Read Isaiah 55:1-3

"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and you will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; listen, that you may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David."

What do you learn about listening from this passage?

What does it mean to listen?

If you have the Blue Letter Bible (BLB) look up Isaiah 55:2 then click on the Interlinear Bible for the word “hearken”

What role does attention play in listening?

What is the relationship between listening and obeying?

Why do you think it is important to listen?

Why do you think listening is important to God?

2. God Listens

Where is listening first mentioned in the Bible?

According to Genesis 1, how did God create everything?

Why do you think he did it this way? (Read John 1:1-3, 14)

n the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.

What do you learn about God from this?

3. Created to Listen

According to Genesis 1:26 how did God create men and women?

Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

According to the Bible, what were the first things people heard?
Why is this significant?

Genesis 1:28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 1: 29 Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.

Genesis 2:16-17 And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

What difference could it make in your life if you were consistently hearing from God in those three areas?

4. God's Gift of Listening

What choice did the Lord give people in Genesis 2:16-17?

And the Lord God commanded the man, "You are free to eat from any tree in the garden;¹⁷ but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat from it you will certainly die."

Why do you think the Lord created people with the ability to choose?

How does this relate to listening?

5. Consequences of Not Listening Wisely

What role did listening play in the Fall? (Read Genesis 3)

Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?"² The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden,³ but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'"⁴ "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman.⁵ "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.⁹ But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"¹⁰ He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."¹¹ And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"¹² The man said, "The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it."¹³ Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

¹⁴ So the Lord God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, 'Cursed are you above all livestock and all wild animals! You will crawl on your belly and you will eat dust all the days of your life.'¹⁵ And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel."¹⁶ To the woman he said, "I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;

with painful labor you will give birth to children. Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you.”¹⁷ To Adam he said, “Because you listened to your wife and ate fruit from the tree about which I commanded you, ‘You must not eat from it,’ “Cursed is the ground because of you; through painful toil you will eat food from it all the days of your life.¹⁸ It will produce thorns and thistles for you, and you will eat the plants of the field.¹⁹ By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return.”²⁰ Adam named his wife Eve, because she would become the mother of all the living.

²¹ The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.²² And the Lord God said, “The man has now become like one of us, knowing good and evil. He must not be allowed to reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life and eat, and live forever.”²³ So the Lord God banished him from the Garden of Eden to work the ground from which he had been taken.²⁴ After he drove the man out, he placed on the east side of the Garden of Eden cherubim and a flaming sword flashing back and forth to guard the way to the tree of life.

Where do you observe listening in Genesis 3?

What happened as a result?

What do you learn about listening from this?

What happens when we fail to listen well?

6. The Power of Listening

Read Genesis 11: 1-9. Where do you see listening in this passage?

Now the whole world had one language and a common speech. ² As people moved eastward, they found a plain in Shinar and settled there.

³ They said to each other, "Come, let's make bricks and bake them thoroughly." They used brick instead of stone, and tar for mortar. ⁴ Then they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves; otherwise we will be scattered over the face of the whole earth."

⁵ But the Lord came down to see the city and the tower the people were building. ⁶ The Lord said, "If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. ⁷ Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other."

⁸ So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. ⁹ That is why it was called Babel because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

What do you learn about listening from what the Lord says in Genesis 11:6?

Considering Genesis 6:5, why do you think this might've been a problem?

The Lord saw how great the wickedness of the human race had become on the earth, and that every inclination of the thoughts of the human heart was only evil all the time. Genesis 6:5

Why do you think the Lord confused languages?

What do you learn about the Lord from this?

7. Growing In Listening Wisely and Well

How does this connect with your life?

What do you sense the Lord is inviting you to do in response?

What can it look like for you to listen to Him and practically do this?



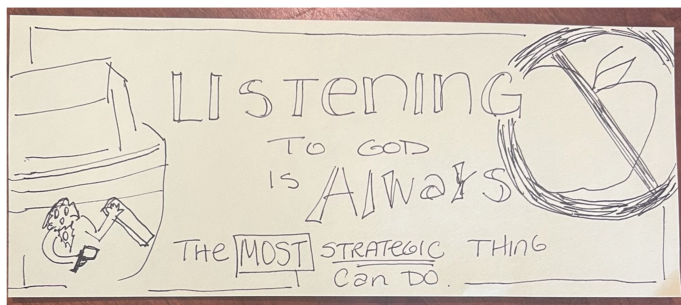
CHAPTER ELEVEN

Creatively Process

WORD ART

Word art added to drawings can also be a fun way to process and remember the treasure God gives you especially if you take time to doodle around it. Grad school killed my handwriting, so I'm not going to win any calligraphy awards. Fortunately, it's not about how your picture looks, but does it capture what the Lord blessed you with?

Here is what I drew at the end of a one-on-one with a friend last week:



And yes, there was a BIG reason the Lord laid that on my heart. You wouldn't be reading this book if I hadn't remembered this! ;0)

MATERIALS NEEDED:

3x5 index card (or cardstock)

Black pens

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Think of a key highlight the Lord laid on your heart.
2. Select one word or phrase to write on your card.
3. Doodle or draw around it as you ponder further with the Lord.
4. Share your creations with each other.
5. Pray - Thanking the Lord for what He's communicated to you and asking for his grace to help you live out what He's invited each of you to do in response.



CHAPTER TWELVE

A Heart That Is Humble

After attending a Navigator conference, a friend told me about a speaker who read the Bible with friends who didn't know Jesus. "You read a chapter of John together, then discuss it. He says people are off the charts eager to do this."

I regularly studied with three friends in the anthropology department. We took most of our classes together and I loved them dearly. The next day after class I asked, "Would you guys like to get together to read the Bible and discuss it?"

All three said yes!

Preparing for our first meeting, I turned to the gospel of John. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God."

Stink! I don't really know what that means! I'd only been a Christian a couple of years. *What if someone asked me about that?* I figured I better start somewhere else.

I'd heard people use Romans Road to share the gospel, so I decided to start with that book.

When Karen, Lori, and Harper arrived at my dorm, I handed them each a Bible. "Let's turn to the book of Romans." I helped them find it. "How about we read the first chapter? We'll each read a paragraph and after we finish reading the first chapter we can discuss it."

They were all in, excited to do this... until we read Romans 1:24: "Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. They exchanged the truth about God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator. . . ."

Karen, who claimed to be a Christian but was living with her boyfriend, slammed the Bible shut. "I don't believe this! You don't have to believe this to be a Christian." She stood up to leave.

Yikes! I thought, knowing all three women were sexually active. *I should have thought this through. . .*

Lori shook her head and then stood next to Karen. "I think I like her version of Christianity better than yours!"

Harper rose. "I'm with them."

All three walked out! I hadn't even said anything about the passage.

I stayed friends with all three of them. But we never again met to read the Bible.

You better believe I went back to the friend who attended that conference. "Could you please explain John 1:1 to me?"

Turns out one of the speakers, Jim Peterson, wrote an entire guide for using John containing great questions and explanations. (*To find*

it online google Jim Peterson 24 hours with John pdf) What a help that proved to be!

If only I'd asked earlier . . . but I didn't want to appear ignorant.

Pride really does go before a fall!

I've since learned you don't have to know a lot to reach out. Consider how Jesus told the former demoniac from whom He cast out legions of demons, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you." But reaching out to share hope is also a skill that can be developed.

Decades later I am still growing in my ability to give the reason for the hope I have! And yes, one of the key ways I learn and grow is through failure! Every failure is ripe with opportunity to grow . . . as long as I go back and dialogue with Jesus about it!



CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Humble Yourself

My friend Emily became a Christian during high school and then attended a Bible college. She got involved with The Navigators when she transferred to her state university at the start of her Junior year.

She joined a Bible study where the leader had only been a Christian for two years but during that time had been met with one-on-one and discipled. When this Bible study leader asked my friend if she'd like to start meeting weekly, my friend jumped at the opportunity.

Each week they met, memorized one verse from The Navigators' Topical Memory System and sought to apply it to their lives. For an entire year, that's what they did. Simple. But my friend said she grew more in that year than she had in the previous five years she'd been a Christian – including her year at Bible college.

The woman who discipled her had been a Christian less than half the years my friend had. There are times when the Lord leads us to invest in women who have been Christians longer than we have,

perhaps even older than us. Or He may lead us to learn from someone younger than us, spiritually as well as physically.

My friend is thankful she didn't resist in pride because she'd been a Christian longer than the friend discipling her. Or that her Bible study leader didn't feel like she couldn't offer because she'd been a Christian fewer years.

Because they both humbled themselves and followed Jesus, it proved life-changing... for life.



CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Shared Quiet Time

A HEART THAT IS HUMBLE

With eyes wide open to the mercies of God, I beg you, my brothers, as an act of intelligent worship, to give him your bodies, as a living sacrifice, consecrated to him and acceptable by him. Don't let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould, but let God re-mould your minds from within, so that you may prove in practice that the plan of God for you is good, meets all his demands and moves towards the goal of true maturity.

As your spiritual teacher I give this piece of advice to each one of you. Don't cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance, but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities by the light of the faith that God has given to you all. For just as you have many members in one physical body and those members differ in their functions, so we, though many in number, compose one body in Christ and are all members of one another. Through the grace of God we have different gifts.

Romans 12:1-4 Phillips Translation

You younger members must also submit to the elders. Indeed all of you should defer to one another and wear the “overall” of humility in serving each other. ‘God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble’.

So, humble yourselves under God’s strong hand, and in his own good time he will lift you up. You can throw the whole weight of your anxieties upon him, for you are his personal concern.

1 Peter 5:5-7 Phillips Translation

LOOK: *(Read the passage above and write below the one verse that stands out to you)*

LISTEN: *(Record below your observations and any thoughts that come to mind as you consider this verse. Dialogue with Jesus about it, asking Him any questions you might have and recording below whatever thoughts come to mind)*

LIVE IT OUT: *How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to this? Is there something you can praise Him for? Or thank Him for? Is there something He is laying on your heart to do as a result of this time you've enjoyed with Him? Record this below.*



CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Time In God's Word

A HEART THAT IS HUMBLE

1. **Draw a picture** of what comes to mind when you think of humility. How does this image connect with your life? Is there a story behind this?

2. Humility vs. Pride

Considering the opposite of something can often yield insights to help us better understand what we are studying. How would you define each of these words? What is the relationship between them?

Look at the Greek definitions for these words. The Greek word for Humble is **ταπεινός** (In English this is transliterated ‘tapeinos’) The Greek word for proud is **ὑπερήφανος** (‘hyperephanos.’). Click on the links to read the definitions for each word. Then, create a chart with Humility in the first column and Pride at the top of the second column. Record what you learn about these words.

HUMILITY	PRIDE

How does this relate to your life? ...your beliefs? ...lies you may believe?

3. Humility and Love

Read **1 Corinthians 13:4-8** in two different versions. Underline anything that stands out to you regarding pride or humility.

“This love of which I speak is slow to lose patience – it looks for a way of being constructive. It is not possessive: it is neither anxious to impress nor does it cherish inflated ideas of its own importance.

Love has good manners and does not pursue selfish advantage. It is not touchy. It does not keep account of evil or gloat over the wickedness of other people. On the contrary, it shares the joy of those who live by the truth.

Love knows no limit to its endurance, no end to its trust, no fading of its hope; it can outlast anything. Love never fails.”

The New Testament In Modern English by J.B. Phillips

“Love meekly and patiently bears ill treatment from others. Love is kind, gentle, benign, pervading and penetrating the whole nature, mellowing all which would have been harsh and austere; is not envious. Love does not brag, nor does it show itself off, is not ostentatious, does not have an inflated ego, does not act unbecomingly, does not seek after the things which are its own, is not irritated, provoked, exasperated, aroused to anger, does not take into account the evil (which it suffers), does not rejoice at the iniquity but rejoices with the truth, endures all things, believes all things, hopes all things, bears up under all things, not losing heart nor courage. Love never fails.”

Kenneth S. Wuest’s Expanded Translation

What could you add from this to your Humility vs. Pride chart that could help you better understand what humility and pride look like?

What role does humility play in loving well?

How can pride hinder us from loving well?

How does having a heart that is humble relate to discipling women?

4. Digging Deeper

Read through the following verses. Underline anything that relates to pride or humility. What else could you add to your chart from your observations?

Romans 12:3 “As your spiritual [leader] I give this piece of advice to each one of you. Don’t cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance, but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities by the light of the faith that God has given to [all of you].” (Phillips Translation)

James 4:4-7 You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. 5 Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? 6 But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes* the proud but shows favor to the humble." 7 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Grieve, mourn and wail. Change your laughter to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. (NIV)

1 Peter 5:-7 You younger members must also submit to the elders. Indeed all of you should defer to one another and wear the "overall" of humility in serving each other. 'God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble'.

So, humble yourselves under God's strong hand, and in his own good time he will lift you up. You can throw the whole weight of your anxieties upon him, for you are his personal concern.." (NIV)

What is the relationship between submission to God and humility?

What is the relationship between submission to others and humility?

What is the relationship between pride and anxiety?

How might humility help with anxiety?

5. Considering God's Perspective

According to the verses above, how does God respond to the Proud?

The Greek word for oppose is *ἀντιτάσσω* (“Antitasso.”) Click on the link and record below what you learn from the Greek definition of this word.

To get an idea of what this can look like read 2 Chronicles 26.

Where do you see pride in this story? How did God respond?

Why do you think God responds this way to pride?

6. Learning from Jesus' Example

What can you learn about humility from Jesus?

Read Philippians 2:5-11

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

⁶ Who, being in very nature^[a] God,
 did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own
 advantage;⁷ rather, he made himself nothing
 by taking the very nature^[b] of a servant,
 being made in human likeness.

⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by
 becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the
 name that is above every name,

¹⁰ that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
 in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

¹¹ and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
 to the glory of God the Father.

Read Matthew 11:28-30²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and
 burdened, and I will give you rest.”²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn
 from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest
 for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.”

7. Growing In Humility

What does it look like to clothe* yourselves with humility?

**NOTE: This is a rare word that denotes a slave putting on an apron
 before serving.*

READ John 13:3-4 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things
 under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning
 to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and
 wrapped a towel around his waist.

What can you learn from Jesus' example?

What does it look like for you to humble yourself?

What can help you remember you don't rise far from the ground in a world that encourages the opposite message?

What key highlights do you want to remember from this Bible study?

How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to what you've learned?

What can it look like for you to practically do that?

A decorative border at the top of the page featuring various light gray floral and leaf motifs, including daisies, tulips, and sprigs of leaves.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

Creatively Process

ESPRESSO PAINT

Coffee. It's not just for drinking anymore! ;0)

Espresso painting can make anyone look like an artist! And it is so easy to do. Here is a picture I created this past week after doing the Bible study on humility.



If you are meeting in a cafe, buy one shot of espresso. (or you can purchase this in advance, espresso keeps well in your freezer). You won't need a lot.

MATERIALS:

A shot of espresso

A cup of water

Two round tip brushes

2 pencils

2 black pens

2 paper towels or napkins for dabbing your brush

2 3x5" to. 5"x5" sheets of Multi-media, watercolor paper

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Take a moment to write down key thoughts or highlights from your time together that you want to remember on one side of the watercolor paper.
2. With a pencil quickly draw a picture that ties in with that thought.
3. There are two ways to espresso paint
 - a. Wet
 - i. Then take a round tip brush and dip it in the water
 - ii. Wet wherever you would like the espresso to go on the page (so you are first painting the image or part of it with water)
 - iii. Then dip your brush into the espresso
 - iv. And put a drop of the espresso on the part of your page you wet. The espresso will spread to fill the area.
 - v. You can determine how dark you want an area to be by how much espresso you put on to the page.
 - vi. Also by letting one area dry as you work in another area you can go back and add more espresso and this can result in beautiful shading
 - b. Dry
 - i. Dip your round tip brush directly into the espresso paint

- ii. Paint it directly onto the dry page
 - iii. As the paint dries you can add additional layers
4. Keep listening to hear what the Lord wants to say to you as you do this.
 5. When you are done creating, share your pictures with each other.
 6. Pray - Thanking the Lord for what He's communicated to you and asking for his grace to live out what He's invited each of you to do in response..



CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

A Heart That Hopes

She'd once been beautiful. Soft, fair skin; blonde hair; lively eyes . . . but those hands! In her thirties she woke up one morning to find them swollen. Eventually the swelling subsided leaving her fingers twisted and contorted. Now in her fifties she could barely use them. I couldn't even look at them.

Then I had a dream. In my dream I saw those hands being held and caressed by the hands of the Lord. As he gently kissed her fingers He declared, "Do you see these hands? I love these hands! I made these hands! They are beautiful to me."

After that, I never struggled to look at those hands! In fact Virginia and I went on to partner together, reaching out in the library where we worked. After my student assistant expressed interest in reading the Bible, we decided to start a Bible study together on the book of John and invited Tori to join us.

What precious times we shared in Virginia's living room! We read God's Word and considered what we learned about the Lord from

each passage and what difference it could make in our lives. Virginia and I were learning so much! The Lord kept meeting us right where we were.

One night Tori exclaimed, “You don’t know what it’s like! I want to understand the Bible the way you both do. I keep trying but I can’t see what you see. I just don’t get it.”

That night my husband and I walked and prayed on campus. I cried out to the Lord, “You say in your Word, if anyone seeks me with all their heart I will be found by them. Please be found by Tori!”

The next day Tori told me she’d been sitting on her bed the night before trying to read her Bible when suddenly it made sense! She could understand it like never before. When I asked her what time that was, can you believe it was right when I was crying out to the Lord?

The angels in heaven weren’t the only ones singing. Virginia’s gnarled hands (and mine!) were raised in praise, too!



CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Hope!

If you desire to disciple women but never were discipled yourself... here's hope!

You don't need a seminary degree or to attend Bible college to do this. You need to know Jesus and be F.A.T.

F = Faithful to follow Jesus even when it's not what you want. Have you surrendered your life to follow Him? A disciple doesn't only know something, but follows Someone and makes His teaching the basis for their conduct and life. You also need to be faithful to those you seek to invest in. When you say you will do something or be somewhere, it's important to do what you say. When I started passing on what was helping me as a brand new believer, I was shaky in this area (being the descendant of a pirate didn't help!). But I was eager to grow. Are you willing to grow in being faithful? For me, that's a lifelong quest.

A = Available. Are you available to do whatever the Lord wants? Can you tell Him, "Not my will, but yours be done?" Even if it's

scrub toilets? Or spend time with a difficult person? Or be still and know that He is God? Secondly, are you available to meet with someone? Discipleship takes time, not only when you're meeting, but time to pray, to listen to the Lord as He guides, and actively love as the Lord directs.

T = Teachable. This is big! Are you still growing? Do you seek to learn all you can from the Lord? Or do you think you already know all you need to know? Are you coasting on things you learned years ago? The moment you stop learning, you stop being a disciple, and that's key because...

You have to be a disciple of Jesus to help someone become a disciple of Jesus. And being Jesus' disciple is not a designation; it's not a position you attain, but a direction you head. It doesn't matter how many years you've been a Christian or if you are on staff with an organization noted for making disciples. If you stop heading in Jesus' direction, if you stop following Him and actively living out what you are currently learning from Him, you are no longer a disciple. Someone who recently began following Jesus and is headed in His direction is more qualified than a fifty-year coaster.

So are you heading in Jesus' direction, committed to faithfully following Him, available to do whatever He wants you to do, and hungry to learn from Him, even things that aren't fun to learn? If you are, you are His disciple. And you are qualified to start helping someone else.



CHAPTER NINETEEN

Shared Quiet Time

A HEART THAT HOPES

“**T**o whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.

27 Why do you complain, Jacob? Why do you say, Israel, “My way is hidden from the Lord; my cause is disregarded by my God”?

28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom. 29 He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak. 30 Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; 31 but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.

Isaiah 40: 25-31 (NIV)

LOOK: (Read the passage above and write below the one verse that stands out to you)

LISTEN: (Record below your observations and any thoughts that come to mind as you consider this verse. Dialogue with Jesus about it, asking Him any questions you might have and recording below whatever thoughts come to mind)

LIVE IT OUT: How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to this? Is there something you can praise Him for? Or thank Him for? Is there something He is laying on your heart to do as a result of this time you've enjoyed with Him? Record this below.



CHAPTER TWENTY

Time In God's Word

A HEART THAT HOPES

Read the following verses, circling every time you see the word **hope**. What do you discover about **hope** from these verses?

Psalm 33:18 But the eyes of the LORD are on those who fear him,
on those whose hope is in his unfailing love, (NIV)

Psalm 33: 22 May your unfailing love be with us, LORD, even as
we put our hope in you. (NIV)

Psalm 130:5 I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits, and in his
word I put my hope. (NIV)

Psalm 147:11 the LORD delights in those who fear him, who put
their hope in his unfailing love. (NIV)

Proverbs 13:12 Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a longing fulfilled is a tree of life. (NIV)

Isaiah 40:31. but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. (NIV)

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. (NIV)

Romans 5:2-7 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. 6 You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. 7 Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. (NIV)

Romans 8:24. 24 For in this hope we were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? 25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. (NIV)

Romans 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (NIV)

Ephesians 1:18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, (NIV)

1 Thessalonians 1:3 We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. (NIV)

Hebrews 10:23 Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. (NIV)

1 Peter 1:3-6 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you, 5 who through faith are shielded by God's power until the coming of the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. (NIV)

Based on the verses above (and any others that come to mind) answer the following questions:

1. What is hope?

2. Where does hope come from?

3. What are we supposed to hope in?

4. In 1 Peter 1:3-6, Peter mentions “a living hope.” What comes to mind when you consider that?

5. What difference does hope make in being Jesus’ disciple? How have you experienced this in your life?

6. What happens when hope is missing?

7. How does having a heart that hopes relate to discipling women? (See 2 Corinthians 3:5-6 and 2 Corinthians 9:8).

2 Corinthians 3:5-6 Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God, who has made us sufficient to be ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit. For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (ESV)

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. (NIV)

What is the connection between these verses and hope?

8. How does this connect with your life?

9. What could you do to keep growing a heart that hopes? How do you sense the Lord inviting you to respond to what He's impressed on your heart today? What will you do with this?

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

Creatively Process

MODELING CLAY

When you can involve different senses into your one on one – like the sense of smell with espresso painting – it can take your processing even deeper. This week you get to enjoy a tactile activity.



The first time my husband and I did this modeling clay activity with our staff team, one of the guys on staff balked. "There is no way I'm going to do that." We had given each staff member a package of modeling clay and asked them to create something that reflected where they were currently. But eventually he did create something – and this proved to be one of the most impactful sharing times we ever facilitated.

There's something about hands on processing, going beyond just words on a page, that can enable you to get more in touch with your heart and hear from the Lord more acutely. It definitely involves more of your brain. That's no small thing considering we are called to love the Lord our God with all our mind.

And because the clay can be molded and re-molded, sometimes I find myself starting out creating one thing but by the time I'm done I've ended up with something different.

When a friend and I camped out in Genesis 2, considering how the Lord fashioned man from the dust of the earth and woman from man, she had fun creating Eve. (see below) But you can also fashion all sorts of objects to serve as metaphors for whatever the Lord laid on your heart. May you have fun with this!



Writing the novel, if I tried too hard to create I often ended up stuck. But it's amazing how creatively flowed when I was playing.

I buy my modeling clay at the dollar store. I purchase one package for each of us.

The instructions are really simple.

MATERIALS NEEDED:

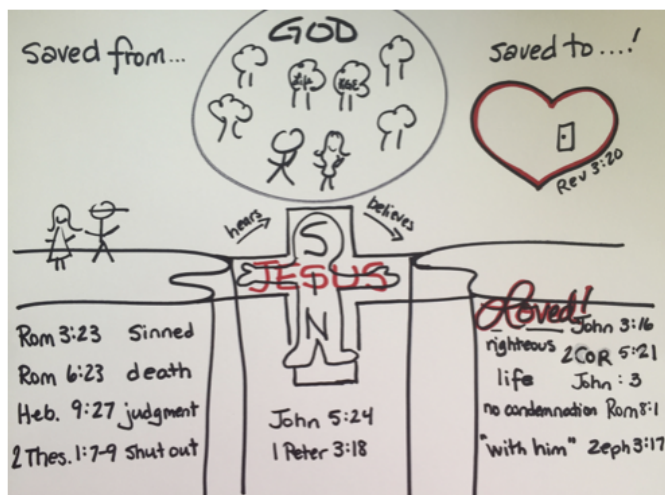
Two packs of modeling clay

INSTRUCTIONS

1. See the bookmark in the next chapter *Preaching The Gospel To Myself*. Read through the prayers until you find one that brings you hope.
2. Create something out of the clay that is related to that.
3. Share your creations with each other.
4. Pray – thanking the Lord for the specific part of the gospel that is connecting with your heart and bringing you hope.
5. Place your creation where it can remind you throughout the week of the treasure you received.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

Preaching The Gospel To Myself Daily



Thank you God that you created me in your image to enjoy relationship with You! (Genesis 1, 2 and 3) Would you please give me the grace I need to live today with you, aware of you, fully enjoying you?

Thank you that just as you are a God who experiences pleasure (Genesis 1:9), when you created me in your image, you made me able to experience pleasure too (Genesis 3:6) and then created things that bring pleasure and placed them in my life! (Genesis 2:9) Please help me remember pleasure needs boundaries or it can be destructive and to learn to live within those you've laid (Psalm 16:6).

Thank you that you have placed tests in my life to give me opportunity to actively choose to love you. (John 14:21, James 1:13-17) Would you please help me remember this when temptation comes my way so I chose you?

Thank you that when I fail those tests, giving in to temptation, your love remains steadfast. (Lamentations 3:22-23, James 1:17) Thank you that you don't change like shifting shadows – you aren't down on me when I blow it and you don't love me more when I get it right. Your love for me is constant even in my worst moments!

Thank you that you are not soft on sin, letting it slide as no big deal, but instead have revealed how serious the consequences are for even the tiniest sin I do. (Romans 3:23, Romans 6:23, Hebrews 9:27, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9) Please help me not try to justify myself (eg., that wasn't as bad as...) or treat my sin lightly but instead to see all of it as you do.

Thank you that you don't just love with words but actively and demonstrated this by sending your son to pay the penalty for my sin which I could never repay. (Romans 5:8)

Thank you Jesus that you were shut out from the presence of the Lord so I never would have to be! (2 Thessalonians 1:7-9, Matthew

27:46) Please help me enjoy this gift of your presence all throughout the day today.

Thank you you've revealed that eternal life is knowing you and this is something that starts now! That I can enjoy now! (John 17:3) Please help me keep growing in knowing you! (Ephesians 1:17)

Thank you that you've blessed my ears so they can truly hear what you've done for me. (John 5:24, Matthew 13:16) Please give me the grace to keep listening to you today!

Thank you for the grace you've given me so I can believe you – not just as a mental assertion – but as an act of faith, entrusting myself to you. (John 5:24) Lord, I believe! Please help my unbelief! (Mark 9:24)

Thank you Jesus that you made it possible for me to have eternal life, that I will never be condemned by You, and that You've provided the way for me to cross over from death to life (John 5:24)

Thank you the moment I did this for the first time I became a new creation in Christ! (2 Corinthians 5:17) Please help me to see myself the way you see me!

Thank you Jesus that you died for my sin once for all to bring me to God. Thank you the good news of the gospel isn't just what I've been saved from but especially what I've been saved to – a wonderful, intimate relationship with You that begins now and will last forever! (1 Peter 3:18)

Thank you that when I do sin you have given me another opportunity to actively love you and bring you pleasure – for it truly is an act of faith when I run to you and confess my sin rather than just continuing to focus on me and beat myself up. (1 John 1:9, Hebrews 11:6) Thank you this not only helps me experience being cleansed from all unrighteousness but also helps me appreciate even more what

you've done for me Jesus so I'll keep growing in loving you! (Luke 7:47)

Thank you that you continue to stand at the door and knock, desiring fellowship with me every single day! (Revelation 3:20)

Thank you that you are with me always and able to save me from whatever challenges I face - both inside and out!

Thank you for taking great delight in me and rejoicing over me with singing (Zephaniah 3:17)



CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

A Heart That Is Patient

“**T**his girl at the gym keeps asking spiritual questions. Would you be willing to meet with her?”

I’ve only been married for two months. I am unhappy about leaving my new husband on a Saturday afternoon, but I love helping people come to know Jesus.

“Alright,” I sigh. I contact the student. We plan to meet for lunch, but I am not interested in wasting time.

As Shonda bites into her burger, I ask. “So Lisa tells me you’re interested in spiritual things.”

Shonda chokes, “Um . . . yes.” She glances around the restaurant and starts picking at her food.

She tells me she’s a grad student studying nutrition. She lives with her boyfriend on the weekends in a town two hours away and commutes to attend classes during the week. Recently they had a huge

fight, and when she slammed her fist into the dashboard, it broke both the dashboard and her hand. “I need something in my life,” she confessed.

We agreed to meet on Wednesdays at 5:00 after I got off work. I’d met another student who wanted to read the Bible, so I invited her to join us.

Each week we read a chapter of John and discussed it. Shonda brought sliced oranges, which I devoured. Kelly ate the rinds. Together our hearts were nourished by God’s Word. Then Shonda spent the next hour teaching us nutrition.

Five months in, Shonda prayed to receive Christ! I was so excited!

But she was still spending every weekend with her boyfriend. I felt pressure to say something about sexual purity, but every time I started to, I sensed the Lord telling me not to. What was up with that?

We continued to meet to read a chapter of John each week and discuss it. Even after someone becomes a believer, continuing to discuss the gospel of John lays a solid foundation for their walk with God, so we kept going. I’ve observed those who make it through all 24 hours with John end up light years ahead of people who quickly pray to receive Christ after seeing an illustration. A solid foundation of knowing who Jesus is and grasping the gospel, as shared by John, provides a powerful start in a new believer’s life.

As Shonda headed “home” each weekend, I prayed, “Lord, are you sure you don’t want me to say anything regarding what the Bible says about sex?”

Week after week, the Holy Spirit impressed on my heart to remain silent, patient and to keep praying.

In the meantime, Shonda was growing, changing, and blossoming before my eyes! Even her boyfriend took note.

That fall, Shonda was doing a nutrition internship at a local hospital. In November, for her birthday, she and her boyfriend decided to head to North Carolina for a romantic weekend away. Before they left town, I hosted a birthday party for her. When she arrived, she pulled me aside.

“You won’t believe what I learned today.” In her internship, she was supervised by a dietician whose husband was a pastor. “Mary shared with me what the Bible says about sex. I had no idea! I’m going to tell Calvin that God’s way is no sex outside of marriage.”

And she did. On the way to North Carolina, she broke the news to him. After months of watching how she’d changed, he responded, “I respect that.”

On their last day in North Carolina, they were hiking a trail when Calvin said, “I wish I could meet another engineer who decided to follow Christ.” The words were barely out of his mouth when a couple overtook them on the trail. The guy was an engineer, who came to Christ through The Navigators! Shortly afterward, Calvin prayed to receive Christ.

Six months later, they got married. As Shonda walked down the aisle, I was overwhelmed by the wisdom of God and the beauty of what He’d done. The Lord knew Shonda needed time for her relationship with Him to grow before she risked her relationship with Calvin to follow God’s way, and in the meantime, God was preparing Calvin, too.



CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

The Key To Powerful & Effective Discipling

When discipling women, prayer is not only a nice way to end your time. One of the most important things we can ever do for those we meet with is pray for them. 1 John 5:4 states, “This is the confidence we have in approaching God, if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us – whatever we ask – we know that we have whatever we ask of Him.”

Is that not wonderful?

But how can I know if what I’m asking for is according to God’s will?

Thankfully the Lord has given in His Word specific prayers we can pray. Consider the following and insert the name of the woman you disciple:

Lord, thank you for _____ would you please give her the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so she can know you better! *Ephesians 1:17*

Lord, would you please enlighten the eyes of _____'s heart in order that she might know the hope to which you have called her! *Ephesians 1:18*

Lord, would you please enlighten the eyes of _____'s heart so she can understand the riches of the glorious inheritance you have for her! *Ephesians 1:18*

Lord, would you please enlighten the eyes of _____'s heart so she can know Your incomparably great power for her as she believes! *Ephesians 1:19*

Lord, would you please enable _____ to be rooted and established in love! *Ephesians 3:15*

Lord, would you give _____ power to grasp how long and wide and high and deep your love is, so she might know this love that surpasses knowledge that she may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of You! *Ephesians 3:16-19*

Lord, would you please enable _____'s love to abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight so that she may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through you, Jesus, to the glory and praise of God! *Philippians 1:9-11*

Lord, would you please work in _____'s life so she may be filled with a knowledge of Your will, with all spiritual insight and understanding, so she may walk in a manner worthy of you Lord, fully pleasing to You, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in her knowledge of You! *Colossians 1:9-10*

Lord, may _____ be strengthened with all power according to Your glorious might so she can endure and live her life with patience and joy, having a thankful heart no matter what comes her way realizing You have already given her what matters most as You have qualified her to share in the inheritance of the saints in light! *Colossians 1:11-12*

Can you imagine the difference it could make in someone's life if you regularly asked the Lord to do this for her?

I have found it helpful to print out the prayers of the Bible on cardstock (and note – there are many more prayers than what's listed here) and take them with me when I walk and pray. Or you can write them on index cards bound with a ring and flip through them while praying. I find this helps me stay focused as I lift the women I disciple before the Father's throne.

But for praying with people I've found it helpful to have these prayers memorized. Since I began to memorize the prayers of the Bible I've been praying God's Word more.

In James 5:16 Scripture says, "The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." Do you want to have a powerful and effective impact on a woman's life that will bless her for all eternity?

Don't just meet with her. Pray for her.



CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

Shared Quiet Time

A HEART THAT IS PATIENT

Lord, listen closely to me and answer me, because I am poor and in need. **2** Guard my life because I am faithful. Save your servant who trusts in you—you! My God! **3** Have mercy on me, Lord, because I cry out to you all day long. **4** Make your servant's life happy again because, my Lord, I offer my life to you, **5** because, my Lord, you are good and forgiving, full of faithful love for all those who cry out to you. **6** Listen closely to my prayer, Lord; pay close attention to the sound of my requests for mercy. **7** Whenever I am in trouble, I cry out to you, because you will answer me. **8** My Lord! There is no one like you among the gods! There is nothing that can compare to your works! **9** All the nations that you've made will come and bow down before you, Lord; they will glorify your name, **10** because you are awesome and a wonder-worker. You are God. Just you. **11** Teach me your way, Lord, so that I can walk in your truth. Make my heart focused only on honoring your name. **12** I give thanks to you, my Lord, my God,

with all my heart, and I will glorify your name forever, **13** because your faithful love toward me is awesome and because you've rescued my life from the lowest part of hell. **14** The arrogant rise up against me, God. A gang of violent people want me dead. They don't give a thought for you. **15** But you, my Lord, are a God of compassion and mercy; you are very patient and full of faithful love. **16** Come back to me! Have mercy on me! Give your servant your strength; save this child of your servant! **17** Show me a sign of your goodness so that those who hate me will see it and be put to shame—show a sign that you, Lord, have helped me and comforted me. **Psalms 86:1-17** (CEB)

LOOK: *(Read the passage above and write below the one verse that stands out to you)*

LISTEN: *(Record below your observations and any thoughts that come to mind as you consider this verse. Dialogue with Jesus about it, asking Him any questions you might have and recording below whatever thoughts come to mind)*

LIVE IT OUT: *How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to this? Is there something you can praise Him for? Or thank Him for? Is there something He is laying on your heart to do as a result of this time you've enjoyed with Him? Record this below.*



CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

Time In God's Word

A HEART THAT IS PATIENT

1. Gazing on God

What do you learn about the Lord from the following verses?
How might your life be different if God wasn't patient?

Then he passed in front of Moses and called out, "I am the LORD God. I am merciful and very patient with my people. I show great love, and I can be trusted. Exodus 34:6 (CEV)

'The Lord is very patient and absolutely loyal, forgiving wrongs and disloyalty. Yet he doesn't forgo all punishment, disciplining the grandchildren and great-grandchildren for their ancestors' wrongs.'
Numbers 14:18 (CEB)

But you, O Lord, are a compassionate and merciful God. You are patient and demonstrate great loyal love and faithfulness. Psalm 86:15 (NET)

Or do you have contempt for the riches of God's generosity, tolerance, and patience? Don't you realize that God's kindness is supposed to lead you to change your heart and life? Romans 2:4 (CEB)

The Lord isn't slow to keep his promise, as some think of slowness, but he is patient toward you, not wanting anyone to perish but all to change their hearts and lives. 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

2. What is Patience?

Read the following definition, underlining anything that stands out to you:

Longsuffering:

long-suf'-er-ing ('erekh 'appayim; makrothumia): The words 'erekh 'appayim, translated longsuffering, mean literally, "long of nose" (or "breathing"), and, as anger was indicated by rapid, violent breathing through the nostrils, "long of anger," or "slow to wrath."

*The word in the New Testament rendered "longsuffering," makrothumia (once makrothumeo, "to be longsuffering"), which is the rendering of 'erekh 'appayim in the Septuagint, is literally, **"long of mind or soul" (regarded as the seat of the emotions), opposed to shortness of mind or soul, irascibility, impatience, intolerance.***

SOURCE: International Standard Bible Encyclopedia <https://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/longsuffering.html>

What comes to mind as you consider this?

Based on this, how would you define patience?

3. What do the following verses reveal about patience?

Psalm 37:7 Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him; do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. (NIV)

Proverbs 14:29 Whoever is patient has great understanding, but one who is quick-tempered displays folly. (NIV)

Proverbs 16:32 Better a patient person than a warrior,
one with self-control than one who takes a city. (NIV)

Romans 8:25 But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently. (NIV)

Romans 12:12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. (NIV)

1 Corinthians 13:4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. (NIV)

Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. (ESV)

Ephesians 4:2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. (NIV)

Colossians 1:9-12 For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will through all the wisdom and understanding that the Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to his glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of his holy people in the kingdom of light. (NIV)

Colossians 3:12 Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. (NIV)

James 5:7-8 Be patient, then, brothers and sisters, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop, patiently waiting for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. (NIV)

4. Why is Patience Important When Discipling Women?

Consider the different facets of patience* listed below. How does each relate to discipling women?

- “slow to anger”
- “slow to avenge wrongs” (*turning the other cheek*)
- “endurance,” the capacity to keep going or put up with pain and hardship for a long time;
- “constancy,” loyalty as a partner and a friend;
- “steadfastness,” adhering firmly and faithfully to a principle or cause;
- “perseverance,” trying hard and continuously in spite of obstacles and difficulties;
- “forbearance,” refraining from action, even when it’s your legal right;
- “longsuffering,” **forgiving**, resigned, tolerant, accommodating, selfless.

*SOURCE: International Standard Bible Encyclopedia

<https://www.biblestudytools.com/encyclopedias/isbe/longsuffering.html>

5. Growing In Patience

How does this connect with your life?

What do you sense the Lord is inviting you to do in response?

What can it look like for you to listen to Him and practically do this?



CHAPTER TWENTY-SEVEN

Creatively Process

PRAISING GOD THROUGH THE ALPHABET

Hands down one of the hardest things I do is wait. It can be so tempting to barrage God with requests for whatever I'm waiting on and get focused on that rather than him.

That's when I find it's extra helpful to praise God through the alphabet. I find being intentional to remember who He is helps me to rest in Him, it revives hope and enables me to more patiently wait.

I love how going through the alphabet helps keep me on track. If I get sidetracked, I think back to the last letter I prayed through and move on. I can do this anywhere, at any time and often do. I was out elliptigoining the other day and had so much fun doing this.

But when I'm first sharing this with someone, having a bookmark to pray through can really help. Especially when you get to X, Y and Z!

When I do this with someone, we each select three things from the list that stood out to us about God as we interacted with him and each other during our time, then go back and forth praising God for those three things and how they connect with your life.

As you do this, I highly recommend **popcorn praying**.

Have you ever prayed with someone and they go on and on and on? I sure can lose focus. I like to think of prayer when I'm praying with a friend as a three way conversation. It's not good social skills when you interact with people to talk for long periods of time. You want to keep it interactive. Besides God already knows what you want to say. When you popcorn pray, think of a kernel of popcorn how it jumps in the air, then another goes. What's extra fun is this can give you time to each pray for the other's three items too, so you can end up praying for six things each. Just tell God one brief reason why you appreciate an attribute he has then let your friend share with him another aspect of this then move on to the next one. Pop! Pop! :0)

Recently I was meeting with a friend and we did this as we walked. After we were done this friend shared she'd been struggling with feeling really anxious and was surprised at how much peace she now felt.

May the Lord meet you in special ways as you do this.

Scroll to the next chapter and you will see the **Praising God Through The Alphabet** bookmark.

This not an exhaustive list. And, yes, I did get creative with some of the letters! ;0)



CHAPTER TWENTY-EIGHT

Praising God Through The Alphabet

A ccepting, Afflicter, Almighty, Alpha & Omega, Ancient of Days, Author, Available, Awesome!

Beautiful, Blessed, Beginning, Builder

Caring, Caller, Chooser, Close, Comforter, Creator, Compassionate, Counselor, Celebrator

Delighter, Defender, Deliverer, Diligent, Director, Discipler, Drawer

Emmanuel, Eternal, Exalted, Encourager, End, Everlasting, Example

Father, Finisher, Faithful, Forgiving, Fisherman

Generous, Gentle, Giving, Glorious, God, Good, Gracious, Great

Holy, Hope, Humble, Healer, Higher,

I am, Innocent, Intercessor,

Jealous, Jehovah, Judge, Justifier, Joy Bringer

Keeper, Kind, King

Light, Love, Leader, Lord, Lamb, Loyal

Mediator, Miracle-worker, Messiah, Merciful, Maker, Most High,
Marvelous

Never leaves, Noticer, Nocturnal (never sleeps), Name above all
Names,

Omnipresent, Only True God, Owner, Omniscient, Omnipotent,

Persevering, Physician, Patient, Powerful, Promiser, Purifier, Peace,
Planner, Priest, Purposeful, Potter

Quieter (He Quiets Us With His Love), Quintessential

Rock, Refuge, Resurrection, Redeemer, Rich, Rewarder, Reviver,
Righteous, Refreshing, Rest

Savior, Sanctifier, Servant, Shield, Sovereign, Shepherd, Sympathetic, Stronghold,

Truth, Transformer, Teacher, Triumphant, Trustworthy, Timeless,

Unchangeable, Understanding, Unequalled, Unfailing, Unmockable, Upright,

Victorious, Vine

Warrior, Waymaker, Wise, Way, Wonderful, Word, Worthy

eXcellent, eXciting, eXalted, eXtraordinary

Yearning

Zealous, Zenith

A decorative border at the top of the page featuring various light-colored flowers and leaves, including what appear to be hydrangeas and smaller blossoms, arranged in a soft, painterly style.

CHAPTER TWENTY-NINE

A Heart That Worships

Our biggest adventure started in 2000 when my husband came home and declared, “I think God wants us to go on staff with The Navigators!” At this point, our son was ten years old and we were both in our late 30s. I couldn’t believe it!

The Navigators had a huge impact on both our lives during college. It made sense to bless another generation of students the way we’d been blessed. So we told The Navigators we’d go anywhere they wanted us to. They sent us back to our alma mater, The University of Florida, to help re-start that ministry.

This campus had been without Navigator staff for eight years. When we arrived there were no students waiting to meet with us. When we went to campus, we had to initiate with every student we met—and I had no idea if I would be able to understand them or not. By this time I’d lost 80 percent of my hearing.

I was ticked off. “Lord!” I stormed. “I told you I’d go into ministry full time when I’d only lost 20 percent of my hearing, but You used my hearing loss to close that door. Now I’ve lost 80 percent, and You send us to a campus where we have to start everything from scratch? What are You thinking?”

One student from our home church asked if I’d be willing to facilitate a Bible discussion in her scholarship house. We were eager to take advantage of every opportunity, so I said, “Sure.”

When she showed me the list of girls who signed up, my heart dropped into my stomach. There were ten girls! How in the world would I follow the conversation?

I will never forget driving to her scholarship house that first night. I was so scared. I sat in the parking lot, crying out to God. “Lord, there is only one reason I am going in there, and that’s because I believe you exist and this is a worthwhile thing to do. But if you don’t show up and do something, I have no idea how I am going to manage this!” It took everything I had to get out of the car and walk up to the house.

Once inside, I discovered we were meeting in a dining area with tiled floors and nearly bare walls. The acoustics were terrible. The girls were already sitting around a huge table staring at me. It was pretty obvious they weren’t even certain they wanted to be there.

I decided to be honest. “I don’t know if Elise told you but I’m severely hearing impaired. I’m pretty much lost in large groups. I honestly have no idea how to make this work.”

Suddenly the girl on my left swung her arm over my shoulder and stated, “I’ll tell you how this is going to work. I’m a speech pathology and audiology major and not one of you is going to talk unless you wave your hand so Deb knows which lips to look at.”

Maria taught all of us so much! I still use her guidelines today.

As I was heading home after that first study, I sensed the Lord say, “Do you realize if you’d gone in there as if you had it all together, ready to teach them the Bible, they might never have come back? But because you went in weakness and were honest, it pulled them together. They were determined to do what they needed to make this work.”

The Lord had a purpose for my handicap!

That was one of the closest groups I’ve ever led. It was beautiful to see so many of those precious ladies start following Jesus.

Shortly after this, I attended a workshop on campus entitled, “Coping with Hearing Loss,” taught by a gentleman with dual doctorates in audiology and counseling. He shared that when people lose their hearing their world begins to get smaller due to fear and pride: they fear not being able to hear and saying the wrong thing, and they are too proud to ask for help.

As I listened to the presenter, I sensed the Lord say, “Don’t you see, Deb? I didn’t want that to happen to you. You are here because I love you!” Sure enough, having to constantly leave my comfort zone to reach out and meet with students kept my world from getting smaller. And led this handicapped girl to worship the One who brings beauty out of brokenness and makes his strength evident in weakness!

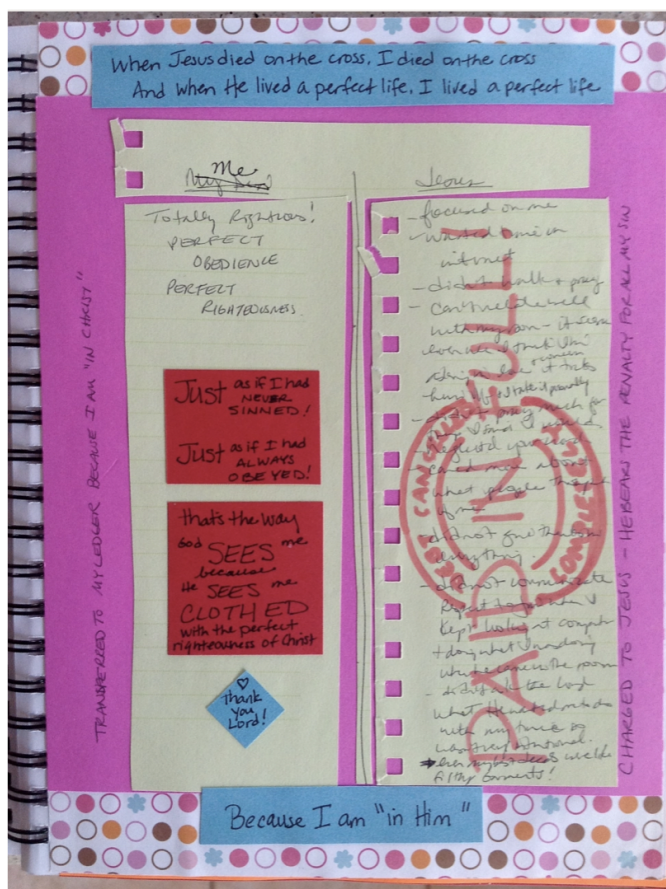
Journal

1. In what ways have you experienced Jesus’ strength being made evident in your weakness?
2. What can it look like for you to worship the Lord when he is calling you to serve in weakness?

A decorative border at the top of the page featuring various light gray floral and leaf motifs, including roses, tulips, and sprigs of berries.

CHAPTER THIRTY

The Great Exchange Embraced



There are some things I do that drive my husband crazy. Like not putting things back (especially his things back) where they belong, how I file by pile (and those piles tend to multiply rapidly) and how I keep losing things. But the one that tops them all is my penchant to awake in the middle of the night, mumbling, "I'm so sorry, Lord!"

The older I get, the more the Lord has opened my eyes to how much I blow it and fall short in everything I do. Nights are the worst. I lay down and my mind replays scene after scene of failure. The accuser has a heyday attacking me.

I've found it helps if I take time before bed to worship the Lord, consider the gospel, and confess sin. But it's one thing to know the truth in your mind; another for the truth to penetrate the depths of your heart...

One treasure the Lord blessed me with recently is Jerry Bridges' new book Who Am I? This book addresses our identity in Christ. I decided to read a chapter each night. It is a fascinating little book. When I reached the fourth chapter ~ I am justified ~ I discovered the most helpful treasure where Jerry explains:

"Second Corinthians 5:21 is often called The Great Exchange, and it works like this. Imagine your life as a moral ledger in which every action, every thought, every word, and every motive is recorded. That's pretty grim because even our very best deeds are like a polluted garment in the eyes of God (Isaiah 64:6). But God takes your sin and removes it from your ledger and charges it to the ledger of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Savior bears the penalty for all your sin.

You are left with a clean but empty ledger, so God does something else. He takes the perfect obedience, the perfect righteousness of Christ from his ledger and transfers it to your ledger. In computer terms you might think of this as "copy and paste" in the sense that the same righteousness, even though it has been given to you, is still available to every other Christian and everyone who will come to Christ in the future.

Now you have a ledger that no longer catalogs your sin but instead bears only the record of 33 years of absolutely perfect righteousness. How

can God do this? How can a just God completely wipe all sin off your ledger and replace it with the perfect righteousness of Christ?

Because we are in Christ. He, as our representative, stands justly charged with our sin and pays its penalty through his death. And because he is our representative, God can justly credit his perfect righteousness to us. So we can say, as Paul essentially says in Galatians 2:20, that when Jesus died on the cross, we died on the cross. And when he lived a perfect life, we lived a perfect life. Because we are in Him...

There are two plays on the word justified that may help us see this more clearly. You can think of it as meaning “just as if I had never sinned.” That is, it does not matter how vile and long-standing your sin is. When you trust in Christ as Savior, God looks at you just as if you’d never sinned.

To state the same thing in the opposite way, you can also think of justified as meaning “just as if I had always obeyed.” That’s the way God sees you because he sees you clothed with the perfect righteousness of Christ.” p. 35-36

When I was in fifth grade I started a newspaper at my Elementary school called *Beaver Tales*. That was back in the pre-computer age when cut and paste literally meant cutting and pasting.

So when I read this I thought, *I should do what Jerry describes*. One night before bed I sat down and drew a line down the middle of a page. I wrote “me” at the head of one column and “Jesus” on the top of the other. Under “me” I recorded all the ways I could think of that I’d blown it that day. I filled my side of the page! Under “Jesus” I wrote “Totally righteous! Perfect Obedience! Perfect Righteousness!”

Then I cut out the column of what I’d done, and the column under Jesus’ name and switched them. Then wrote on top of my day’s sin

list that was now in Jesus' column "PAID IN FULL! Debt cancelled completely." And on top of Jesus' column that was now mine, I pasted the reminder "Just as if I had never sinned! Just as if I had always obeyed!" and "That's the way God sees me because He sees me clothed with the perfect righteousness of Christ! Thank you Lord!"

Now that may not seem like much, but doing this had a HUGE impact on my heart. ...and on my marriage. Not once have I mumbled in the night since.



CHAPTER THIRTY-ONE

Shared Quiet Time

A HEART THAT WORSHIPS

Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! **34** “Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?” **35** “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?” **36** For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen.

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

3 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself

with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

Romans 11:33 - 12:3 (NIV)

LOOK: *(Read the passage above and write below the one verse that stands out to you)*

LISTEN: *(Record below your observations and any thoughts that come to mind as you consider this verse. Dialogue with Jesus about it, asking Him any questions you might have and recording below whatever thoughts come to mind)*

LIVE IT OUT: *How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to this? Is there something you can praise Him for? Or thank Him for? Is there something He is laying on your heart to do as a result of this time you've enjoyed with Him? Record this below.*



CHAPTER THIRTY-TWO

Time In God's Word

A HEART THAT WORSHIPS

1 . Gazing on God

What do you learn about God from this passage?

*Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! “Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor?” “Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?” For from him and through him and for him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen. **Romans 11:33-36 (ESV)***

Draw a quick picture to illustrate what stands out to you as you ponder this.

2. What does it mean to Worship?

Note the passage above precedes Romans 12:1-2. What do you learn about worship from this passage?

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. **2** Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (NIV)

What is the connection between taking time to consider who God is and worship?

The very first mention of worship is found in Genesis 12:1-5. What do you learn about worship from this passage?

Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, "Abraham!"

"Here I am," he replied.

2 Then God said, "Take your son, your only son, whom you love—Isaac—and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on a mountain I will show you."

3 Early the next morning Abraham got up and loaded his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. 4 On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. 5 He said to his servants, "Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you." Genesis 12:1-5 (NIV)

The same Hebrew word for worship in the Genesis passage above is also found here:

“Come let us bow down in worship. Let us kneel
before the Lord our maker.” Psalm 95:6 (NIV)

What does this reveal about worship?

Have you ever physically bowed down before the Lord with your head on the ground?

It can be a wonderful way to start the day literally putting your head on the ground as you go to the Lord in prayer.

I find this puts my heart and mind in perspective when i take time to consider, “I am..., You are...”

I am...	You are...
I am limited in what I can see	You are able to see everything. Nothing is hidden from you.
I am able to do some things	You are able to do all things
I am present in one place	You are present everywhere
I don't rise far from the ground	You are the High King of Heaven
I am able to know in part	You are omniscient, you know everything
Apart from you I can do nothing	Nothing is impossible for you.
I have a limited perspective	Your thoughts are as high as the heavens above the earth.
I am finite, I have limits	You are infinite

What else can you add to this list above?

Read Exodus 9:1 in the NIV and ESV. What new insights do you gain about what it means to worship from these different translations of the same Greek word?

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘This is what the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, says: “Let my people go, so that they may worship me.” (NIV)

Then the Lord said to Moses, “Go in to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord, the God of the Hebrews, “Let my people go, that they may serve me.” (ESV)

In his Expository Dictionary Bill Mounce says, “Worship is the appropriate response of a heart that adores God.”

If someone asked you, “What is worship?” how would you describe it?

3. The Danger of Worship

What do you learn about the danger of worship from the following verses?

Not to us, Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness. **2** Why do the nations say, “Where is their God?” **3** Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him. **4** But their idols are silver and gold, made by human hands. **5** They have mouths, but cannot speak, eyes, but cannot see. **6** They have ears, but cannot hear, noses, but cannot smell. **7** They have hands, but cannot feel, feet, but cannot walk, nor can they utter a sound with

their throats. **8** Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them. **Psalms 115: 1-8** (NIV)

The Lord says: “These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. Their worship of me is based on merely human rules they have been taught. **Isaiah 29:13** (NIV)

All who fashion idols are nothing, and the things they delight in do not profit. Their witnesses neither see nor know, that they may be put to shame. Who fashions a god or casts an idol that is profitable for nothing?_Behold, all his companions shall be put to shame, and the craftsmen are only human. Let them all assemble, let them stand forth. They shall be terrified; they shall be put to shame together. The iron-smith takes a cutting tool and works it over the coals. He fashions it with hammers and works it with his strong arm. He becomes hungry, and his strength fails; he drinks no water and is faint. The carpenter stretches a line; he marks it out with a pencil. He shapes it with planes and marks it with a compass. He shapes it into the figure of a man, with the beauty of a man, to dwell in a house._He cuts down cedars, or he chooses a cypress tree or an oak and lets it grow strong among the trees of the forest. He plants a cedar and the rain nourishes it. Then it becomes fuel for a man. He takes a part of it and warms himself; he kindles a fire and bakes bread. Also he makes a god and worships it; he makes it an idol and falls down before it. **Isaiah 44:9-15** (ESV)

“I hate, I despise your religious festivals; your assemblies are a stench to me. **Amos 5:21** (NIV)

“These people honor me with their lips but their hearts are far from me.” **Isaiah 29:13, Ezekiel 33:31, Matthew 15:7-9** (NIV)

What thoughts come to mind as you consider this is mentioned three times in the Bible?

4. How can wrong worship occur in discipleship?

What I mean is this: One of you says, “I follow Paul”; another, “I follow Apollos”; another, “I follow Cephas”; still another, “I follow Christ.” Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized in the name of Paul? **1 Corinthians 1:12-13** (NRSV)

He did not say this because he cared about the poor but because he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it. **John 12:6** (NIV)

Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. **Luke 22:24** (NKJV)

What other examples can you think of that relate to this?

5. Honoring God In Worship

Consider the following verses. What can help us worship God in a way that honors him?

Jesus answered, “It is written: Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.”

Matthew 4:10 (NIV)

How can this help us worship God in a way that honors him?”

How can remembering what Jesus said in Luke 7:47 help us worship God in a way that honors him?

Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But he who is forgiven little, loves little.” **Luke 7:47** (ESV)

But be sure to fear the LORD and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you. 1 Samuel 12:24 (NIV)

Read Psalm 73. How important is worship for continuing to follow Jesus and finishing life strong as his disciple?

Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart.² But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled, my steps had nearly slipped.³ For I was envious of the arrogant when I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

⁴ For they have no pangs until death; their bodies are fat and sleek.⁵ They are not in trouble as others are; they are not stricken like the rest of mankind.⁶ Therefore pride is their necklace; violence covers them as a garment.⁷ Their eyes swell out through fatness; their hearts overflow with follies.⁸ They scoff and speak with malice; loftily they threaten oppression.⁹ They set their mouths against the heavens, and their tongue struts through the earth.¹⁰ Therefore his people turn back to them, and find no fault in them. ¹¹ And they say, "How can God know? Is there knowledge in the Most High?"¹² Behold, these are the wicked; always at ease, they increase in riches.¹³ All in vain have I kept my heart clean and washed my hands in innocence.¹⁴ For all the day long I have been stricken and rebuked every morning.¹⁵ If I had said, "I will speak thus," I would have betrayed the generation of your children.

¹⁶ But when I thought how to understand this, it seemed to me a wearisome task,¹⁷ until I went into the sanctuary of God; then I discerned their end.

¹⁸ Truly you set them in slippery places; you make them fall to ruin.¹⁹ How they are destroyed in a moment, swept away utterly by terrors!²⁰ Like a dream when one awakes, O Lord, when you rouse yourself, you despise them as phantoms.²¹ When my soul was embittered, when I was pricked in heart,²² I was brutish and ignorant; I was like a beast toward you.

²³ Nevertheless, I am continually with you; you hold my right hand.²⁴ You guide me with your counsel, and afterward you will receive me to glory.²⁵ Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on

earth that I desire besides you.²⁶ My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.

²⁷ For behold, those who are far from you shall perish; you put an end to everyone who is unfaithful to you.²⁸ But for me it is good to be near God; I have made the Lord God my refuge, that I may tell of all your works.

5. Worship & Discipling Women

How does what you've learned in this study apply to discipling women?

6. Growing A Heart That Worships

When you think about worship as an act of submission, serving, and humbly acknowledging who God is and who we are in relation to Him what thoughts come to mind? What does it look like for you to keep developing a heart that worships?

Think of a time when the Lord asked you to do something difficult. In what way was that worship? Are you currently facing struggles to do what the Lord is calling you to do? What difference can it make realizing this is an opportunity to worship?

How can a heart that worships help keep Christ at the center of your life? What can that practically look like for you?

How does what you've learned in this short Bible study connect with your life?

What do you sense the Lord is inviting you to do in response?

What can it look like for you to listen to the Lord and practically do this?



CHAPTER THIRTY-THREE

Creatively Process

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

“**S**he who is forgiven much loves much.” Here is a creative exercise that can increase worship! It can also provide an excellent opportunity to share the gospel creatively.

CREATE A Great Exchange Page

You can see how to do this in this video.

Materials needed:

Two pieces of blank paper (I like for one to be colored, the other to be card stock) for each of you

Glue stick

Red Pen or marker (if you have one)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Create two columns on one piece of paper (the colored paper if you have this)
2. At the top of one column, write your name. At the top of the

other column, write “Jesus.”

3. Under your name, record the sins you’ve committed recently (you don’t have to share these!)
4. Under Jesus’ name, write Perfect Righteousness, Perfectly sinless for 33 years.
5. Ask the women to watch you.
6. Share how Jesus made a great exchange possible when he died on the cross. Tear your page down the center (easy to do if you fold and wet the crease with your tongue) between the two columns and then across the top underneath your name and Jesus’ name.
7. Glue your name and Jesus’ to the top of the cardstock or second sheet of paper.
8. Share how Jesus died to pay the penalty for our sins and invites us to make the great exchange and how you took him up on this.
9. On your cardstock, glue your sins under Jesus’ name.
10. Write “Paid In Full” on top of your sins
11. Now glue Jesus’ column under your name and write “Just as if I never sinned.” and “Just as if I did everything right.”
12. Then share with the women this is the invitation Jesus offers to all of us. To receive his gift, agree that we are sinners, believe that he died to pay the penalty for our sins, and surrender to him. It’s called the great exchange because I’ve

given Jesus all my sins and I'm getting his righteousness in exchange. And that's how God sees me, even on my worst day. Clothed in his righteousness, all my sin paid in full."

Share your thoughts about this.

Pray - Thanking the Lord for what He's communicated to you and asking for his grace to help you live out what He's invited each of you to do in response.



CHAPTER THIRTY-FOUR

A Heart That Perseveres

When I turned 33 I decided I wanted to read through the Bible. Fifteen years prior, after becoming a Christian, I'd memorized 2 Timothy 3:16, "All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." I desired to experience that first hand. So I dove in and was blown away!

Throughout the year I kept sharing new treasure I was finding with friends around me. On December 31 I was so excited as I finished the last chapter of Revelation. I'd done it! I'd read through the entire Bible!

And that was the end of that. Or so I thought . . .

After hearing all the neat things I was discovering as I read through the Bible, a bunch of friends said, "We want you to do it again so we can read through the Bible with you." January 1 found me diving back in and once a week hosting a group of women eager to read the Bible for themselves.

We read about four chapters a day, underlining anything that stood out to us, and then came together once a week to share highlights. We had a great time! The women were so excited they couldn't help but tell their friends. Each week the group kept growing.

When we started Leviticus, two sisters showed up, wanting to join. While talking with them, I realized they weren't Christians. I usually read the book of John with people who want to know Jesus, not Leviticus! But that's where they started.

Can you believe as we finished Leviticus, the oldest sister became a Christian? It was incredible seeing her life change. She was pregnant with her second child, and a chain smoker who tried for years to kick the habit with no success. But after entering a relationship with Jesus her addiction to cigarettes was gone!

The other sister was in the middle of a nasty divorce. She was a legal secretary and declared, "I'm not committing to anything spiritually until I've read the entire book." Sure enough, at the end of the year when she finished reading the Bible, she gave her life to Christ!

What a blessing to experience, not only is all Scripture useful for believers, but God can save anyone through any part of His Word . . . even Leviticus!

Was I ever thankful the Lord gave me the grace to persevere in doing this!

A decorative border at the top of the page featuring various light-colored flowers and leaves, including daisies and sprigs of foliage, arranged in a soft, painterly style.

CHAPTER THIRTY-FIVE

The Power of Processing

I've never been much of a scrapbooker. I made one when Jim and I were dating, but that was years before Creative Memories and it was a rather simple affair. But one of the girls I was meeting with loved to do this! And as I was praying, asking the Lord what He'd like for us to do during our next time together, He gave me the idea to take her to a scrapbooking store and let her pick out materials to make one page summarizing the key thing the Lord recently was teaching her. Little did I realize the treasure we were both in for!

She was sooooo excited! We started our time praying asking the Lord to guide us, to bring to mind what He wanted us focusing on and to help us create a picture that represented this. It turned out most of our time that week was used just selecting supplies so I asked if she'd complete her page during the coming week and then share it with me at our next one on one and I decided I'd create one too.

Now at first I was bummed that our entire time was taken up by the selection of materials – what kind of one on one was this? But you know, it was amazing how we both experienced the Lord even through the process of deciding what to use as well as when we had to think through the lessons we'd been learning to select one. And then as we started putting our pages together it was like the Lord was right there with us, not only helping us create a picture of what He'd been teaching us, but the actual process of creating helped us further process and internalize that lesson even more! And what a powerful time we experienced the next week when we shared our creations!

Shortly after this a friend shared with me how he'd been reading all the verses in the Bible that talk about remembering – and realized how incredibly key it is to take time for this.

Numbers 15:40 ESV

So you shall remember and do all my commandments, and be holy to your God.

Deuteronomy 8:2 ESV

And you shall remember the whole way that the LORD your God has led you these forty years in the wilderness, that he might humble you, testing you to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep his commandments or not.

Deuteronomy 8:18 ESV

You shall remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your fathers, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 16:12 ESV

You shall remember that you were a slave in Egypt; and you shall be careful to observe these statutes.

Deuteronomy 32:7 ESV

Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations; ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you.

(And that's but a taste! The word "remember" occurs 162 times in the ESV Bible!)

Prior to this when I thought about spending time one on one with someone I was always forward focused – what's going to help her move forward and press on in her walk with God? But this experience really highlighted for me how vital it is we periodically take time to intentionally remember, and process deeper what the Lord is teaching us. The irony is, taking time to look back, process and remember, really can spur us on even more!

Fast forward a few years to our sabbatical last summer. I asked the Lord if He'd give me a creative way to remember the lessons He'd be

teaching me throughout it. That's when He led me to art journaling. Again I was blown away at how taking time to create a picture of what He's teaching me helps me learn on a deeper level – and sometimes even figure out what's going on in my heart!

And you know, this takes place in a format I actually enjoy looking back through and praying through – which only serves to help me remember even more! (I'm a very messy writer and an external processor who writes volumes every day just to think and pray – I would never want to go back and read all of that! But I love to look at these pictures!)**

Recently a friend asked if her Bible study could come over and art journal with me. We paired up and shared a quiet time in Psalm 139 and then took time to create an art journal page illustrating what the Lord laid on our hearts. It was so precious to hear each woman share and “see” what she was learning! I cannot recommend highly enough doing this!

So now, when I meet one on one with someone I will periodically take time for us to actively, creatively process what the Lord's been teaching us. At the end of a semester, the end of the year, the end of a Bible study ~ these are all great times to do this.

In fact, at the end of one summer training program after we'd inductively studied the book of Genesis, as a way of further processing what we'd learned I encouraged the students to go back and draw a quick sketch or do word art, featuring on an index card the main thing from each chapter that stood out to them. Talk about a fun and insightful way to review and help summarize when finishing a Bible study!

As it says in Ecclesiastes 7:8, “The end of a matter is better than it's beginning...” Don't miss out on the best part by rushing onto the next thing! Taking time to further process and remember can enrich

and deepen your relationship with the Lord, and with those you are discipling!



CHAPTER THIRTY-SIX

Shared Quiet Time

A HEART THAT PERSEVERES

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Hebrews 12:1-3 (NIV)

LOOK: *(Read the passage above and write below the one verse that stands out to you)*

LISTEN: *(Record below your observations and any thoughts that come to mind as you consider this verse. Dialogue with Jesus about it, asking Him any questions you might have and recording below whatever thoughts come to mind)*

LIVE IT OUT: *How do you sense the Lord is inviting you to respond to this? Is there something you can praise Him for? Or thank Him for? Is there something He is laying on your heart to do as a result of this time you've enjoyed with Him? Record this below.*



CHAPTER THIRTY-SEVEN

Time In God's Word

A HEART THAT PERSEVERES

1. The Call To Persevere

In Ephesians 6:18 the Greek word transliterated *proskarteresis* means perseverance. This word only occurs only one time in the Bible. In this verse what is the context in which we are called to persevere?

*“With every prayer and request,
pray at all times in the Spirit,
and with this in view,
be alert with all perseverance
and every request for all the saints,”
Ephesians 6:18 (NAS)*

1. Why do you think perseverance in this is important?

What might that look like for you?

What else are we called to persevere in?

	Believers are called to persevere in:	What does this look like for you?
Seek the LORD and his strength, seek his face continually. 1 Chronicles 16:11(ESV)		
But you must return to your God; maintain love and justice, and wait for your God always. Hosea 12:6 (NIV)		
rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, Romans 12:12 (NAS)		
And as for you, brothers and sisters, never tire of doing what is good. 2 Thessalonians 3:13 (NIV)		
strengthening the souls of the disciples and encouraging them to continue in the faith. "We must endure many hardships to enter the kingdom of God," they said. Acts 14:22 (NIV)		

What does this look like for you?

In the verses listed above, what other words or phrases communicate perseverance?

2. Examples of Perseverance

Read Hebrews 11: 24-27. Circle the word persevere.

“24 By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh’s daughter. 25 He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. 26 He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt, because he was looking ahead to his reward. 27 By faith he left Egypt, not fearing the king’s anger; he persevered because he saw him who is invisible.” (NIV)

What did perseverance look like for Moses?

What helped him persevere?

What can you learn about perseverance from Moses?

In James 5:11 we are given another example of someone who “persevered.”

“As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. You have heard of Job’s perseverance and have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.” (NIV)

What did perseverance look like for Job?

And the BEST example of all...

Read Hebrews 12:1-3

“Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” (NIV)

What did perseverance look like for Jesus?

What helped him persevere?

What can you learn from Jesus about perseverance?

How might your story have been different if Jesus hadn't persevered?

Take a moment to write out a prayer of thanks to him:

3. Benefits of Persevering

“After Job had prayed for his friends, the Lord restored his fortunes and gave him twice as much as he had before.” Job 42:10 (NIV)

What did the Lord finally bring about for Job?

What benefits of persevering are evident in the following verses?

1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain. (NIV)

1 Timothy 4:16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers. (NIV)

1 Peter 2:20 But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. (NIV)

James 1:12 Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, that person will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love him. (NIV)

*James 5:10-11a Brothers and sisters, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. **11** As you know, we count as blessed those who have persevered. (NIV)*

Revelation 3:10-11 Because you have obeyed my command to persevere, I will protect you from the great time of testing that will come upon the whole world to test those who belong to this world. I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have, so that no one will take away your crown. All who are victorious will become pillars in the Temple of my God, and they will never have to leave it. And I will write on them the name of my God, and they will be citizens in the city of my God—the new Jerusalem that comes down from heaven from my God. And I will also write on them my new name. (NLT)

4. Perseverance & Love

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7

4 Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5** It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. **6** Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. **7** It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. (NIV)

What do you learn about perseverance from this verse?

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 as translated in the Message Bible.

*“If I speak with human eloquence and angelic ecstasy but don’t love, I’m nothing but the creaking of a rusty gate. **2** If I speak God’s Word*

with power, revealing all his mysteries and making everything plain as day, and if I have faith that says to a mountain, "Jump," and it jumps, but I don't love, I'm nothing. 3-7 If I give everything I own to the poor and even go to the stake to be burned as a martyr, but I don't love, I've gotten nowhere. So, no matter what I say, what I believe, and what I do, I'm bankrupt without love.

Love never gives up. Love cares more for others than for self. Love doesn't want what it doesn't have. Love doesn't strut, Doesn't have a swelled head, Doesn't force itself on others, Isn't always "me first," Doesn't fly off the handle, Doesn't keep score of the sins of others, Doesn't revel when others grovel, Takes pleasure in the flowering of truth, Puts up with anything, Trusts God always, Always looks for the best, Never looks back, But keeps going to the end." (MSG)

What does this add to your understanding of perseverance?

How does having a heart that perseveres, relate to a heart that is humble, a heart that hopes, and a heart that is patient?

5. The Role of Perseverance In Discipling Women

Why do you think it is important to have a heart that perseveres when discipling women?

6. What Can Help You Persevere?

Consider: What is God's Part?

Psalms 37:23-24 The steps of a man are established by the Lord when he delights in his ways. When he falls he will not be hurled headlong because the Lord is the One who holds his hand. (ESV)

Jeremiah 32:40 I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me. (NIV)

John 10:28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. (NIV)

Philippians 1:6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (NIV)

Consider: What is Our Part?

Philippians 2:12-13 Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose. (NIV)

1 Thessalonians 1:3 We remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ. (NIV)

What thoughts come to mind as you consider this?

6. Highlights from Your Time In God's Word

What have you sensed the Lord highlight for you as you've spent this time with Him in His Word?

What do you sense He is inviting you to do in response?

What could it look like practically for you to do this?

CHAPTER THIRTY-EIGHT

Creatively Process

ART JOURNALING

Art journaling. Journaling + art = what a winning combination!



Visually I love the look. But the greatest benefit, the best treasure comes as I prayerfully process while putting each page together.

I start with an idea. One thing the Lord is teaching me. Then ask him to give me a picture portraying this (and if drawing is involved I'm crying out desperately for the ability to depict what comes to mind!).

And as I work with different materials scrap booking remnants, glue, colored pencils and pens, watercolors, acrylics, ink, old magazines, pictures, its amazing to see not only how the picture is taking shape but how I am better learning what He is teaching me!

I'm not an artist, so for me starting is always an act of faith. That's why I get so excited when a page comes together. I know I'm experiencing the Lord helping me do what I can never do. And often in the middle I'm wondering if anything good at all will ever come of this. But without fail... God spoke through a donkey! And time after time I experience Him meeting me as I do this.

Be honest with the Lord if you're feeling hesitant. Ask for His help.

God is a creator. We were created in His image. That means ALL of us have been created to create. Maybe not to create great works of art. To be honest, great artists often struggle to do this. Art can be work and it can be hard to turn off that side of the brain to be more available to listen. In our weakness God's strength really is made evident. It can impact us deep in the soul when we create. That's one reason I believe the enemy goes all out to shut us down when we are younger and make us think unless we're a Rembrandt being creative isn't for us. That's not true. Take back the ground he's robbed you of and may your soul flourish and you experience much joy in the Lord as you do this.

If you'd like, you can hear me share more on a video here: [A Heart That Perseveres part 4 Creatively Listening To God.mp4](#)

THE GOAL: Create a hope-full page that summarizes or captures the key treasure the Lord blessed you with as you learned about developing a heart that perseveres.

MATERIALS NEEDED:*

Magazines,
Scissors,
markers,
pens,
a glue stick,
blank paper to glue your creation onto
crayons,
stickers,
stamps.

***NOTE:** You can do this as simple as you'd like, even using regular notebook paper and a bic pen, and it will still be impactful.

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. **CREATE Your Backdrop:** You can either use heavy paper or glue multiple sheets of regular paper together. It helps to have a substantial background to hold the weight of the images. I find mixed media paper or cardstock works best for this. You can even use black paper as a basis. What color would you like your background to be? This can help pull your creation together.
2. **SELECT images and words:** Start with the picture you selected at the beginning or select a new one that connects with a key thing that stood out to you during your time together.

Look for images or words you can add.

3. TEAR or CUT OUT the images and words you selected from the magazine. Even the way you cut the picture can add to the creativity.
4. PLAY with the ARRANGEMENT of the images and words on your background page.
5. WRITE in the spaces around the pictures and images, what's stood out to you from your time together.
6. Have fun creating a hope full page that summarizes or captures the key treasure the Lord blessed her with during your time together. Or she might create something that brings to light how she's struggling to hope. Encourage her to listen to the Lord as she does this
7. MISTAKES can be opportunities to listen. Ask the Lord to help you. You might find He was at work re-directing your thinking through what you initially thought messed everything up.
8. SHARE your pages with each other when you are finished creating.
9. PRAY for each other.

About the Author

Debbie Entsminger came to Christ during her first week in college through some Nav guys who lived next door. A woman on staff, Barb Choat, discipled Debbie and helped lay a solid foundation as she helped her learn to follow Jesus and become His disciple. For the past forty-one years, Debbie has been meeting with women one-on-one helping them come to know Jesus, keep growing in a relationship with Him, and learn how to pass on to other women what she's passed on to them for life. She serves with the Collegiate Navigators despite being deaf. Five years ago, the Lord did a miracle and restored her hearing through cochlear implants. What a mighty God we serve!

Deb has been married to Jim, her best friend and ministry partner, for 37 years. When she isn't meeting with women one-on-one, writing or creating in her art room, you will either find her exploring, enjoying kayak, bike and elliptigo adventures with Jesus, or with a book in hand, savoring a good story. She is convinced Jesus writes the best ones!