

THE HEART OF DISCIPLING WOMEN

Collection Two: Guidebook



GROWING TRUST

Through
Experiencing
God's Promises

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*Trust in the Lord with all your heart
and lean not on your own
understanding;
in all your ways submit to him,
and he will make your paths straight.
Do not be wise in your own eyes;
fear the Lord and shun evil.
This will bring health to your body
and nourishment to your bones.*

Proverbs 3:5-8

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THE STRUGGLE IS REAL

“I am so frustrated.” My friend exclaimed, “Sometimes the woman I’m discipling shows up, other times not. Sometimes, she comes prepared, having done what I asked, and other times not. I never know what to expect.”

Discipleship can be challenging. However, I’ve found frustration can be reduced by understanding the difference between follow-up and discipleship.

What Is Follow-Up?

When someone first becomes a Christian, Jesus uses the analogy of a baby to describe them. What do babies need? To be fed, cared for, protected, given lots of love, and to have their diapers changed!

In Ephesians, Paul describes young Christians as infants tossed on the waves, not very stable and steady. But in Hebrews 4:12, the believers are admonished, “Though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the basic principles of God. You need milk, not solid food.” Unlike physical babes, maturing isn’t guaranteed for believers.

This is why we are encouraged to grow (Ephesians 4:15, 2 Peter 3:18). 1 Peter 2:2 points out how critical God’s Word is for helping us do this. A basic fact for both physical as well as spiritual growth is you need to eat for this to happen. But babies often won’t eat on their own.

What a difference it makes when they have someone help them eat and then learn to feed themselves.

The Need For Follow-Up

When Billy Graham’s crusades started taking off, and thousands of people were coming to know Christ, he became concerned. What was happening to all these people afterward?

Dawson Trotman encountered this same dilemma after picking up a hitchhiker. When he shared the gospel, the guy prayed to receive Christ. Dawson was so excited! Until he discovered the guy had prayed to receive Christ with him the year before, and his life hadn’t changed one bit.

That's what got Dawson on the track of seeing the need for follow-up. He found it made a big difference when someone would intentionally come alongside a new believer to help him get rooted and grounded in his walk with God.

When Billy Graham heard about this, he came to Dawson and asked for help to develop a plan for "following up" those who became Christians at his crusades.

One of Dawson's spiritual grandson's, Charlie Riggs, created the follow-up materials Billy Graham used at his crusades. (You can read this story in Lorne Sanny's article [A Heart for Individuals¹](#))

The Goal of Follow-Up

So follow-up is helping a young believer grow. But what's the goal? What are you shooting for as you do this? And how will you know when you've accomplished this goal?

You want to see them become a disciple of Jesus!

What Is A Disciple?

The Greek word for disciple, μαθητης literally means a follower and a learner. Not just one who acquires head knowledge, but one who takes what is being learned and makes it the conduct for her life. We want her to follow Jesus so she can learn from Him and increasingly become like Him, joining in with what He's doing, bearing fruit for the Father's glory.

When a person becomes a Christian in a country where there is extreme persecution of believers, they have to be a disciple because to openly declare they are following the Lord, they must be ready to die for Him.

But in a cushy, materialistic society, surrender often comes slower. Many times, there is a process people go through before they are ready to die to themselves and commit to following Jesus wherever He goes, doing whatever He wants them to do, whenever He wants them to do it.

Also, before someone is ready to say to the Lord, "Not my will, but yours be done" she needs to be able to trust His way really is better. And trust He is able to do a better job guiding her life than she is. In our broken and fallen world, where people's trust has been violated and hearts have been wounded, this can be difficult to do.

So here's the kicker – you have to be a disciple before you are ready to be discipled!

A disciple is a follower and learner. To follow someone, you have to go where he goes and do what he does – and not just when he happens to be going the way you want to go. But you won't come to the point of surrender, where you're ready to follow Jesus when your heart is screaming to go the other way until you learn to trust Him.

¹ <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/530e4ef9e4b07ec5e7d89c14/t/571509abd51cd4eb8ab8f7fa/1460996524044/A+Heart+for+Individuals+-+by+Lorne+Sanny.pdf>

So follow up is not only helping someone lay a solid foundation for a lifetime of relating with Jesus, it's helping her grow in trusting Jesus so she will become His disciple.

Growing In Trusting God

How do you grow in trusting someone? By experiencing them doing what they say they'll do.

This is where we realize how very great and precious God's promises truly are! God never had to promise us anything! But he does. A key reason why is so we will have the opportunity to experience Him being faithful to do what He said He'd do and grow in trusting Him.

One of the best things you can ever do with someone is help her learn one promise each time you meet, discuss it so she truly understands what God has and hasn't promised, and then encourage her; how will she take God up on this offer so she can experience Him? Then, the next time you meet ask how it went as she did this.

This is like Miracle-Gro!

Surrender

Now, as she grows, at times, she may look like she's following Jesus, but where the rubber meets the road is what does she do when God leads in a different direction than where she really wants to go? This almost always involves a crisis, where she reaches a fork in the road, and a key decision has to be made: will she go Jesus' way or her own way? It's a crisis because this usually involves something very dear to her.

For me, it happened when the Lord asked me to give up my major in college and follow Him, studying whatever He wanted me to (and He didn't tell me at first what that would be!). I'd always been one of those people with a ten-year plan. I was studying broadcast journalism and already hosted a television show for two years and had just been appointed the Assistant Programming Director for a radio station.

How I wrestled as the Lord made it so clear He wanted me to walk away from all this. Then, one day, in July of 1983, I came to the point of surrender, left that job, and became "undeclared" in my major. At that moment, I became Jesus' disciple. I didn't know where we were going, but I was committed to following Him each step of the way.

That was one big, "Yes!" that every day needs to be followed by smaller yeses! And it doesn't mean I always get it right. But it's a direction I'm heading, and by the grace of God, I pray I keep heading throughout the rest of my days!

So, you follow-up a woman until she is ready to follow Jesus wholeheartedly. And then the adventure of discipling begins, of helping her learn what it means to follow someone she can't see and helping her persevere even when all hell breaks loose because Satan is so not happy about this.

But oh, the joy it brings Jesus!

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDEBOOK

This guidebook was created to provide ideas for how the contents in the second collection in the Heart of Discipling Women Library can be used during one-on-ones. This collection focuses on helping women grow in trusting God through memorizing, understanding and actively applying His very great and precious promises. In the tool section of the Collection 2 Library, you can find the booklet **Tackle n' Trust**, which is available to download and print free of charge or can also be accessed electronically on a phone, tablet, or laptop.

This guidebook is written to provide the discipler with guidelines for how to take someone through that tool over the course of seven weeks and also includes resources to help disciplers continue to grow as disciplemakers.

Each week features a **Heart to Heart Guide** which provides a suggested outline for what it can look like to meet with a woman for two hours to care for her soul as you share the journey going through Tackle n' Trust. Be sure to follow Jesus as you prayerfully prepare.

We have placed within this guidebook the corresponding pages from **Tackle n' Trust** for each week as some people prefer to keep it all together.

You will also find supplemental material. Remember the goal in discipleship isn't a transfer of information but for God's Word to dwell richly in your life as well as in the life of the woman you are meeting with and for both of you to actively respond as you sense the Lord inviting you to. This is where transformation takes place and trust has opportunity to grow.

You may not need the supplemental material but it's here to enrich your own walk if you'd like to make use of it. Again, follow Jesus in this. Think of this guidebook as a feast where the main course are God's Promises served in the booklet Tackle n' Trust. Everything else are sides that you may or may not wish to partake of. There is content for weekly quiet times that provide opportunity to consider each week's memory verse in context, stories, and bookmarks for prayer (you can find printable versions in the tools section).

Jean's videos in this collection are gold and continue to address more of the soft skills in the heart of discipling women and are well worth the time to watch. But again, follow Jesus regarding what He wants you to do.

The Guidebook in Collection 1 shows how to structure one-on-ones using Jean's videos as the centerpiece. We call that the Heart Track. This Guidebook is centered on the Tackle n' Trust booklet and is the Tool Track. But just as the Collection 1 Guidebook included tools, so this Guidebook continues to address the heart. Both are vital.

May the Lord abundantly bless your time alone with Him in preparation as well as the time you enjoy with the women you disciple together with Jesus.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at navigirladventures@gmail.com

HEART TO HEART



Introduction:

A HEART THAT TRUSTS

H_{EAR}

Assess where the woman whom you are meeting with is at by asking:

1. “Can you share a time when Jesus wanted you to go one direction and you really wanted to go another. What happened?”
2. Listen intently to her response. Does it sound like she has surrendered to Jesus? This can be a helpful way to determine this.
3. Then share the story of your answer to this question.

E_{XPLORE}

Watch: Jean’s video on *A Heart That Trusts*

Discuss: How do you grow in trusting someone?

Read: Promise-Based Follow-Up (I like to bring a copy of this printed out so we can highlight the things that stand out to us as we read)

Discuss: How do you think applying God's promises help to grow our trust in Him?

Watch Jean's video **A Heart of Application**

Discuss: What did you learn about application from Jean?

Share: a Quiet Time in 2 Peter 1:3-4 Using Look, Listen, Live It Out & Let It Last

APPLY

How do you sense the Lord inviting you to respond to what He's laid on your heart today. What could it look like practically for you to do this?

Ask if she'd like to spend the next five weeks learning a promise from God each week and taking Him up on it.

Introduce Tackle and Trust. Then, read pages 5-8 together

If she wants to keep meeting, make arrangements to continue

REMEMBER

Creatively Process: Draw a quick picture illustrating the main thing that stood out to each of you. Share your pictures with each other.

Discuss: What other highlights stood out to you today?

TELL A FRIEND

PRAY: Tell Jesus what you appreciated about your time with Him today.

PASS IT ON: With whom could you share what you learned today? What could that look like?

TREASURE FROM JEAN

Watch the TREASURE FROM JEAN videos in the Heart of Discipling Women Library on the Promises of God under Tools

Promises of God video, part 1

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RuD8jZsFWt5Itph2iMHF8Nps3VpNFna9/view?usp=sharing>

Promises of God video, Part 2

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/15byAgDTxenEHjTGM7jzMzzlcuF2nMHyQ/view?usp=sharing>

PROMISE-BASED FOLLOW-UP

How do you grow in trusting someone?

One key way occurs as you experience them being faithful to do what they say they will do.

Imagine if I told you I was going to bake a cake for you and bring it to our meeting next week. If you didn't know me very well you might think, "Wow! That'd be nice. I wonder if she really will." If I show up next week cake in hand, what will you think the next time I tell you I'm going to do something?

You'll probably be expecting it to happen. You are starting to trust me. And the more you experience me doing what I say I will do, you will trust that when I say something I mean it... that I can be counted on.

Conversely if I told you I'd deliver a message to someone, perhaps you needed to meet them at the library at 10, and I said I'd tell them but then forgot – what would you think the next time I offered to do something for you?

Would you trust me if there was something really important that needed to be done? What if your life depended on it?

Trust is eroded when people fail to do what they say they will do. Someone can be faithful to do what they say they will nine times out of ten but if they drop the ball just one time, the next time they offer to do something you will wonder...

And here's the kicker – trust can also be eroded if we think someone has said they will do something and they don't do it. Right?! Even though I am the one misunderstanding, a seed of doubt gets planted in my heart when disappointment occurs – and it can take a lot to overcome it.

“God told me I should...”

New believers must learn to hold their impressions with an open hand. I can't even begin to count the number of times this phrase has been used to shut down a conversation, and shut out godly advice. For example,

“But Susie, he's not even a growing Christian!”

“I know, but God told me I should date him.”

Or “God doesn't want me going to a summer training program this year.”

End of conversation. How do you argue with that? And they miss out on a great opportunity to grow when really it was fear they were listening to.

What is Good?

We grow up all our lives defining good based on how something impacts us, how it feels, what the world around us says it is. Yet even experience tells us our evaluation can be wrong. Ever think something looked so good only to get it and discover it really wasn't?

Jesus says, "No one is good except God alone." (Mark 10:18) He sets the true standard.

God's will is good. Everything else is evil – no matter how "good" or spiritual it may seem. For example, if God wants you studying for a final exam but you go have a quiet time with someone – that's evil. Why? It's not what God wants you doing!

James 4:17 says, "Anyone then who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it sins."

Evil isn't defined by a particular activity. Evil is whatever isn't God's will. If God wants you peeling potatoes, then that is good, spiritual, beneficial – the best thing you could be doing! And to do anything else is sin!

But we don't automatically know what God's will is. We are told in Hebrews 5:14, "But solid food is for the mature who through constant use have trained themselves to distinguish between good and evil."

We need to be trained to distinguish between good and evil! To discern what is God's will and what is not. No one automatically has that ability. When a person becomes a believer, they may think they know what good is – but really, who defines good? God! And his thoughts aren't our thoughts, his ways aren't our ways, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are our thoughts than his thoughts and our ways than his ways. (Isaiah 55:8-9)

Trained to Discern

So how do you get that training? How do you grow to the point where you can distinguish between good and evil? Through "constant use."

But constant use of what? If you read Hebrews 5:14 in context, you will find the solid food it's referring to is the Word of God. Through constant use of the word of God! By reading and applying (that's using it, right?), you aren't just getting to know God better and getting a head's up on how to best live each day – you are training yourself (KJV says "training your senses") to distinguish good from evil!

But note that word "mature" – maturity takes time. It will take time doing this before you learn how to make this distinction. And in the process, you will fail. You may read your Bible and think God is telling you to do something; you do it, and it all goes belly up! Don't think God steered you wrong. You didn't distinguish rightly! But this is how you learn.

It's like the old-time radios – you had to fiddle with the dial to get a good signal. Why? Because other noises come through and it takes a lot of effort to get the exact frequency you want coming in loud and clear.

All day, every day, there are many voices speaking to us: voices from our past, the voice of our own desires and fears, as well as the voice of the enemy! He is a deceiver. He loves to get us sidetracked, mistaking his voice for the voice of God.

So here is the dilemma – you develop discernment through constant use – and having daily quiet times is one key way to do this – as long as you are actively seeking to “use” the Word through applying it and living it out. But new believers need to hold their impressions of what they think God has said to them with an open hand.

How did you learn to walk? By falling down. A lot. Failure is a tremendous teacher. You will never learn to walk if you aren’t willing to fall. If you have the expectation that from the get-go, every step you take should be firm, and you should be ready to run a marathon – are you ever in for disappointment.

New believers need to recognize there is a big difference between trusting what God says and trusting in their ability to discern.

This is why it is critical we help new believers understand how vulnerable they are to mishearing and misunderstanding God. It is critical they realize that listening to God is something you learn how to do, something that requires discernment. And this discernment will take time to develop.

This is why it is so key they develop the discipline of daily quiet times in a format where they are reading the word and actively applying it. Being faithful in doing this, they will eventually develop discernment!

But God hasn’t left them hanging in the meantime!

The Gift of God’s Promises

In 2 Peter 1:3-4 we’re told, “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these, he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.”

Did you catch that? God has given us everything we need for life and godliness!. Everything! We have all we need to experience that abundance of life Jesus died to bless us with (John 10:10) and to be like Him. But it’s just like Christmas – there may be a ton of presents under the tree given to you with your name on it, but until you open them and use them, they aren’t going to be much benefit to you.

How do you get to know God? Through His Word! And in His Word, He has given us his very great and precious promises.

Why are they so great and precious?

Well, let’s consider – What is a promise?

It’s when someone says I will do something, and you can bank on it.

God knows it's going to take time for us to develop discernment – to learn to identify his voice and know what he's telling us he will do. So He took the initiative to clearly tell us things we can count on him to do. You don't need discernment when the message is clear!

Did you ever wonder why God makes promises? It's so we can grow in trusting him. Even as a baby believer, you can do this. When God promises, you can count on it! And as you do, you get to experience Him in action, being faithful to do what He has said He will do. When this happens, can you ever grow in trusting Him.

But just like those Christmas gifts under the tree, you've got to open them (to know what they are) and use them (actively applying them in your life) to receive the full benefit of them.

Lessons on Assurance

After I have helped a new believer learn how to have a quiet time and spent a couple of months getting her established in this discipline (once she is reading the Word, meditating on it, and actively applying it daily), we will camp out in 2 Peter 1:3-4 and I will help her understand her need to be trained to discern and how God's promises can help her grow in trusting Him.

After this, I will give her a copy of Tackle N' Trust. This is an excellent tool for helping someone get started on this adventure of growing in trusting God.

The first chapter focuses on God's Promise of Salvation. I explain how important it is to start with this, because a promise is only valid for the person it's given to. If I promise my husband that I am going to bake a cake for him, you can't overhear me and assume I'm going to make one for you, too. I promised him. So if next week comes and there's no cake for you, should you be disappointed?

But if I tell you I'm going to bake a bunch of brownies for you, you should be expecting them.

In the same way, there are promises in the Bible that God gives to specific individuals. Not all promises are for us. In Luke 1:31, Mary is told, "You will be with child, and you will give birth to a son." That was a specific promise given to Mary. Women struggling with infertility can't automatically "claim" that promise as theirs. God told Mary he would do this. And it happened.

But there are many promises the Lord has given to all believers. If you have entered into a personal relationship with God through Jesus, these are for you. But if you haven't, they're not. So, this booklet begins with God's promise of Salvation. If you've taken him up on that one, then you're assured the rest of these promises are for you.

This chapter is followed by four chapters, each featuring one promise: God's Promise of Answered prayer – John 16:24, God's Promise of Help in Temptation – 1 Corinthians 10:13, God's Promise of forgiveness – 1 John 1:9, and God's Promise of wisdom– James 1:5

What I find of great benefit is breaking down each promise phrase by phrase so you really chew on it to understand the meaning. You want to make certain new believers understand what God has promised – as well as what he hasn't.

For example, in John 16:24 Jesus says, “Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive and your joy will be complete.” If you don’t take time to really understand this verse you might treat it as *carte blanche* – ask for anything in Jesus’ name and you’ll get it. Brand new Porsche, anyone?

But God only gives good gifts (James 1:17). If we ask for something we think is good but it's not really, should we expect him to give it to us? Would you want him to? Initially sure! But if it really wasn’t good?

Taking time to chew on this verse, you realize Jesus doesn’t promise “ask, and you will receive what you ask for,” does he? No. He says ask, and you will receive. If you ask for something that's bad for you, God isn’t promising to give it to you, but he does promise you will receive something. And it will be good.

Do you see what a blessing this is? When we don’t yet have the discernment to know what’s good, God protects us while still being generous with us. Psalm 84:12 states, “No good thing will he withhold from those whose walk is blameless.” If it’s a good thing, he will give it to you. You can bank on it. So if you ask for something and don’t get it, it will only be because it’s not good for you.

But God promises when you do ask, you will receive something! You don’t need to be afraid to ask because of your lack of discernment. When you ask you will receive good stuff – so ask away. And in the process, will you ever experience Jesus!

Reaping full benefit

If you take a Christmas gift, unwrap it, use it a few times, and then put it on a shelf in your closet, it’s of limited value to you. So it is with God’s promises. You’ve got to know them to use them. The best way to know them and remember them is to memorize them.

This booklet provides a wonderful jump-start into doing this very thing. When I go through this booklet with a friend, before we ever discuss the first chapter, we memorize together the first verse. We focus on one section at a time and I ask them to repeat after me. There are detailed instructions in *Tackle and Trust* that walk you through this process!). I find if people memorize this before doing the study on it, they process much better – and are much more likely to remember the verse.

It may seem stilted and crazy to take your time, going back and forth memorizing each portion of the verse, but don’t go on to the next segment until they have the previous section word perfect.

And have fun with this! We will often do hand motions or a rhythm or even put the verse to music as we are doing this. One student I met with even created a dance as she memorized, where each word was connected to a different movement. Creativity helps!

We don’t stop learning the verse and going over it until they can quote the verse word perfect. Even then, I tell them they don’t really have it memorized until they can quote it word perfect 70 times. And I challenge them to review the verse ten times each day in the coming week.

It's critical they don't review silently to themselves. I encourage them to take initiative to ask others to hear them recite their verse and check them on it. Not only can this be a great conversation starter, but it also protects you from thinking you've got the verse memorized when you don't. I can't begin to count the number of people who "had it down" when saying the verse to themselves, but drew a blank trying to say it for me.

Usually, I have women work through the chapter on their own, and then when we get together the next week, we review our verse(s) and discuss the chapter, especially focusing on how they have put the verse to use in their life. I can't stress enough how vital it is you encourage them to apply it. This is where they have opportunity to experience God being faithful to do what He's said He will do and grow in trusting Him. Examples are given in the book.

Remember, it is vital you seek to use the promise yourself during the week. This really is where the rubber meets the road.

Very Great and Precious

There are a lot of promises in the Bible. Promises God has made to his children. And each one is an opportunity to grow in trusting Him.

After you have worked through the five promises featured in Tackle n' Trust, it is so important to show new believers how to identify promises on their own. Books are great for initially teaching something but you don't want them becoming dependent upon published materials. Ultimately, you want them to know how to identify promises on their own and be motivated to spend time meditating on them, breaking each verse down section by section to consider what it really means, then actively apply it in their life.

First, I walk them through the process using just the Bible.

How do I pick where we'll go next? Here it is critical to consider what is going on in their life. What are they struggling with? Is it fear? Check out Isaiah 41:10. Loneliness? Hebrews 13:5. Feeling overwhelmed? Philippians 4:13. Financial needs? Philippians 4:19. There are promises that specifically address each area of life.

I will usually pick out a promise that relates to something happening in their life and walk them through the same process covered in Tackle n' Trust – memorize the verse, then take time camping out in each section to make certain they understand what God has promised, then consider how it can be actively applied in our lives.

For example, an attempt was made to abduct one of our students on her way to Bible study. Did she ever wrestle with fear after that. The guys who tried to abduct her had done so right outside her apartment. They knew where she lived.

Isaiah 41:10 became a lifeline for her – each day as she came home from class or laid in bed at night listening for any sounds outside, she clung to this verse and wrestled to trust what God said. In the process, did she ever get to experience Him. Today, she is on staff helping others learn how to trust Him.

Ultimately, it's great to get them to read through the Bible on their own and highlight each promise they come across. This is a treasure hunt that can radically change their life, if they take the extra steps to memorize, meditate and apply.

Foundational for Follow-up

The goal of follow-up is to get someone to the point where they trust Jesus with everything. To help them progress to the place where they are ready to be a disciple – denying themselves, taking up their cross daily and following Jesus.

Trust is foundational to this occurring.

For some, this is easier than others. If your mother and father were trustworthy, it won't be as hard to trust God. But in a day when it's increasingly rare to find someone whose word can be counted on this can take a lot more time to develop. (I can't stress enough how critical it is for disciples to be faithful to do what they say they will do. Establishing a relationship of trust lays such a critical foundation.)

But the more we expose God's children to His promises and help them really understand what each means and get them experiencing Him through them, does it ever spur them on in this process!

This is why God's promises are very great and precious. The Almighty God of the universe has taken the initiative. He has bound Himself and said I will do what I have said I will do. He didn't have to do this.

But oh, the pleasure it brings Him when we take Him up on His offer and help others do so, too!

The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises
and faithful in all he does

Psalm 145:13 (ESV)

TACKLE N' TRUST

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## INTRODUCTION

Trust in the LORD with all your heart,  
And do not lean on your own understanding  
In all your ways acknowledge Him  
And He will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6 (ESV)

Do you ever struggle to trust God?

I know I do.

- \* When there's anxiety in my life, that's a sign I'm struggling with trusting the Lord regarding my future or the future of those I love.
- \* When I beat myself up after I blow it, that's evidence I'm not trusting Jesus has paid the penalty for my sin.
- \* When I grumble or complain instead of giving thanks, this reveals a lack of trusting God that He knows what He's doing and has a purpose for what I'm going through and will bring good out of it, which I'll be so thankful for later!
- \* When I disobey God's commands, I fail to trust God that He knows best and instead trust myself to call the shots and direct my life.

Do I ever miss out when I fail to trust him!

So, how do you grow in trusting someone? I've found a key way is to experience them doing what they say they will do!

When I say I'm going to do something, you have an opportunity to experience and know me. To know either I do what I say I'm going to do or don't do what I say I'll do.

Let's say you need a ride home from a meeting, and I say, "I'd be glad to give you one. You can ride home with me!" But then I leave without you. The next time I offer to do something, will you expect me to do it?

Trust is slowly built and easily broken. This is why God's promises are so very great and precious - they are ways that God has given us to experience Him and grow in trusting Him - because He always keeps His promises!!!

Check out what it says in 2 Peter 1:3-4

His divine power has given us  
everything we need for a godly life  
through our knowledge of Him who called us  
by His own glory and goodness.  
Through these He has given us  
His very great and precious promises,  
so that through them we may participate  
in the divine nature,  
having escaped the corruption in the world  
caused by evil desires.

2 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV)

Did you catch that? God has given us everything we need for a godly life! How incredible is that?!!! And how has He done this?

Through our knowledge of Him. That's not only knowing about God but experientially "knowing" him. Knowing that when he says He will do something, He does it! You can count on it!

This is why He has given us His very great and precious promises. In them, he tells us what He's going to do, so when He does it, we'll experience Him being faithful! And have the opportunity to grow in trusting Him!

When I meet one-on-one with someone, after I share with them how to spend time daily with Jesus and help them get established in doing this on their own, I always dive into sharing God's promises with them.

Why? Because after someone enters into a relationship with Jesus, they most need to get to know him - not just know about him, but know him experientially so their trust in Him will grow. This is a crucial difference between discipleship and what we call follow-up.

To be Jesus' disciple means to follow Him and seek to learn from Him. We can't do that unless we are going His way, fully surrendered to Him. And considering His thoughts aren't our thoughts and His ways aren't our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9), we won't do that unless we trust Him. So until a person has reached that point of complete surrender where they can say, "Not my will but Yours be done," and become Jesus' disciple until they are ready to follow Him wherever and however He leads even when they don't understand, they need someone to follow them up. They need someone to keep spurring them on to get to know Him better by spending daily time with Him and taking Him up on His promises.

Growing in trusting God is one of the most important things we will ever do!

Remember, God never had to promise us anything! But He does because He so delights in having a relationship with us. And you can't have much of a relationship without trust. Especially when someone's ways aren't your ways and their thoughts aren't your thoughts!

What a difference the gift of God's promises can make in our lives--enabling us to participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires!

In The Navigators, we have a rich heritage of trusting God and taking Him up on His promises! Dawson Trotman, the founder of The Navigators, used to charge people, "TNT!" This stood for Trust and Tackle the promises of God! Trust God for what He has said, then go out and tackle applying His word in everyday situations. (<https://navhistory.org/2018/01/31/youth-ministries/>)

In this resource, I've flipped the T's so you first learn how to **Tackle** God's promises (memorize and understand them) so you can better **Trust** God's promises for the rest of your life. As a result, you will experience the abundance of life Jesus paid so dearly to make available to you!



**TACKLE:** First, memorize the promise. Then take time to truly understand what God is promising . . . and what He's not promising.

**TRUST:** Whenever we act on something we've read in God's Word, it's a huge act of faith. We are saying, "I believe you exist and reward those who earnestly seek you."



Remember how I shared at the beginning God's promises are designed to help us experientially know Him? Yes, there are benefits in taking God up on His promises that are inherent in the promises themselves. But the most significant benefit is not in seeking the blessings the promises provide but in getting to know the One who is the source of all blessings!

Do you realize how much pleasure it brings God when you do this?! (Hebrews 11:6)

Of course, this resource does not contain all God's promises. There are thousands in the Bible! But I hope as you learn how to process and integrate these into your life and experience the benefit of doing so, you'll want to take God up on even more of His promises. And you'll be equipped with tools to help you do it!

One of the best ways to start acting on every single promise God has made--to take God up on His offer and experience Him through it--is through prayer.

Ready to start on an adventure with Jesus?!

Take a moment to share with the Lord your response to the gift of His promises and the opportunity to experience Him through them:

# TIME IN GOD'S WORD

2 PETER 1:3-4

**LOOK:** (Read the three translations below and then write in your journal the verse or portion of a verse that stands out to you)

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to[a] his own glory and excellence,[b] 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 2 Peter 1:3-4 ESV

3-4 Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God. The best invitation we ever received! We were also given absolutely terrific promises to pass on to you—your tickets to participation in the life of God after you turned your back on a world corrupted by lust. 2 Peter 1:3-4 MSG.

3 I can pray this because his divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence. 4 Through these things he has bestowed on us his precious and most magnificent promises, so that by means of what was promised you may become partakers of the divine nature, after escaping the worldly corruption that is produced by evil desire. 2 Peter 1:3-4 NET

**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.

**LET IT LAST:** Draw a picture summary of what stood out to you.

# PRAYING GOD'S PROMISES

1. **PROVISION:** His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. <sup>4</sup>Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. 2 Peter 1:3-4
2. **VICTORY:** No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it. 1 Corinthians 10:13
3. **PROVISION:** And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19
4. **GUIDANCE:** He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. Isaiah 40:11
5. **PRESENCE:** Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." Hebrews 13:5
6. **COMFORT:** The Lord is close to the brokenhearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit. Psalm 34:18
7. **HOPE:** And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. Romans 8:28
8. **SECURITY:** I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one will snatch them out of my hand. John 10:28
9. **REST:** He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. Colossians 1:17
10. **PEACE:** You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Isaiah 26:3



11. **INSIGHT:** ‘Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.’ Jeremiah 33:3
12. **COMPLETION:** 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. Philippians 1:6
13. **GUIDANCE:** This is what the Lord says—your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: “I am the Lord your God, who teaches you what is best for you, who directs you in the way you should go. Isaiah 48:17
14. **RESCUE:** Even to your old age and gray hairs I am he, I am he who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you; I will sustain you and I will rescue you. Isaiah 46:4
15. **HELP:** So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. Isaiah 41:10
16. **FUTURE:** 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. Jeremiah 29:11
17. **ACCEPTANCE:** Though my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will receive me. Psalm 27:10
18. **GENEROUS:** For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. Lord Almighty blessed is the one who trusts in you. Psalm 84:11-12
19. **TROUBLE:** “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” John 16:33
20. **GUARANTEED:** Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and your dominion endures through all generations. The Lord is trustworthy in all he promises and faithful in all he does. Psalm 145:13

# HEART TO HEART



## *A Heart That Belongs*

WEEK 1: JOHN 1:12-13

## HEAR

1. Share a story of a time when you felt like you belonged. What was that like?
2. Share a story of a time when you felt like you didn't belong. What was the difference?
3. What difference can it make in your relationship with God to feel like you belong?

## EXPLORE

### 1. IMAGE GALLERY

1. Select an image from the image gallery. When you think of salvation what comes to mind? Why?
2. Read John 1:12-13. What image did John have in mind when he wrote this verse? Why do you think he selected this?

## 2. MEMORIZE

1. Write John 1:12-13 on a card
  1. Begin with Title: God's Promise of Salvation
  2. Next Line put the reference: John 1:12-13
  3. Write the verse phrase by phrase
  4. Then put the reference again at the bottom of the card: John 1:12-13
2. Memorize John 1:12-13
  1. phrase by phrase, one phrase at a time,
  2. reviewing each time what came before
  3. until they can quote the whole verse word perfectly.

## 3. BIBLE STUDY

1. Now do the Bible study in chapter 1 of Tackle 'n Trust seeking to understand what has God promised

## **A**PPLY

1. Share Your Stories of Becoming A Child of God – Be sure to give a good bit of time letting them share their story of becoming a child of God and be ready to share your story too. (NOTE: you cannot assume just because they want to meet with you that they are a child of God, listen to hear where they are at)
2. Consider:
  1. What difference can it make in your life to really remember and embrace at the heart level that you are God's child?
3. Challenge:
  1. Review John 1:12-13 at least seventy times this week
  2. EXTRA: To process deeper, watch Jean's videos on ***A Heart That Belongs*** (then journal answering the following questions)

1. What do you think can help you keep that new baby smell?
2. What did you learn from Jean about being a child of God?
3. EXTRA: To process even deeper, enjoy Time In God's Word this week, considering the memory verse in context. (see next chapter. I like to camp out in the context all week focusing on a different part of the passage each day. It never ceases to amaze me how much more Jesus teaches me when I do this, even if I only spend 10 minutes a day doing this)
4. Practical Tool:
  1. On the back of their verse card have them create a grid where they can check off each time they review their verse. Make certain they understand even though they may be able to quote their verse word perfectly right now it's only in their short term memory and can easily be forgotten. They can not consider to have this verse memorized until they have quoted it 100 times word perfect out loud. NOTE: that out loud part is important and it's best if they quote it out loud to people around them.
5. Discuss ways they might be able to do this
  1. (eg., standing in line or waiting for a class or meeting to start ask someone to check them on their verse - you never know what conversations this might get going!)

## **R**EMEMBER

1. What highlights stood out to you during our time together this week?
2. Creative Review (p. 18) – Bring tracing paper and markers (Tombow markers or Calligraphy pens can make this even more fun if you have them, but are not necessary). Have fun tracing the verse in Calligraphy. If you don't have tracing paper or Tombow markers, see if you can re-create the calligraphy on another sheet of paper as you look at Debbie Friley's design. Have fun!

## **T**ELL A FRIEND

1. Pray giving thanks to God for this incredible gift of becoming His child
2. Share with a friend what you learned today. (You always learn it better when you pass something on to someone else!)

# TRUE DISCIPLESHIP STORIES

A few months ago, I arrived at the airport thirty minutes before my flight was to depart. Sarasota has a tiny airport that doesn't take much time to go through, but still, I was thankful to have TSA Precheck. There were only a few people in front of me at the security gate.

As I waited my brain was filled to overflowing with all I'd been learning, synthesizing new concepts as I prepared to give two workshops the next day in Ft. Collins on evangelism for the Rocky Mountain Navigator staff. Plus it had been a bear to pack for this trip. Was I ever thankful to have that behind me!

I smiled as I approached the TSA officer who instructed me to put my boarding pass on the reader.

When I did, the light turned red.

"Whoops! I must've given you the wrong one." I was scheduled to change planes in Ft. Lauderdale before heading to Denver so I had two boarding passes. I quickly flipped through my apple wallet to get to the other one.

When I scanned it, the light again turned red. "Let me see that," the security officer asked, then shook his head. "Ma'am, we don't have a terminal C at this airport. Your ticket is for Tampa."

I had come to the wrong airport! And my plane was scheduled to depart in less than 30 minutes! Tampa International Airport is an hour away. There was no way I could make it in time.

I raced downstairs to the Southwest desk, which amazingly was clear of people.

"I can't believe I came to the wrong airport . . ."

After hearing my predicament, the agent replied, "Just this once, we'll reschedule you. You can fly to Dallas and then catch a plane from there to Denver."

The only problem? I was supposed to arrive at 7:45 p.m. and get a ride with the regional leaders as they drove from Colorado Springs to Ft. Collins. My new flight wasn't scheduled to arrive until 11 p.m.

I remembered I have a friend on staff who lives near the airport, and she planned to drive to Ft. Collins the next morning. When I texted her, she said I was welcome to stay at her home and drive up with her in the morning, but I needed to find a way to get to her house.

The thought of taking an Uber at 11 pm at night and getting into the car with a stranger did not appeal to me. But I didn't have any other option, so reluctantly, I went to the Uber app to schedule a pickup. When I typed in what I needed, up popped the message, "No rides available" in Denver at 11 pm. I groaned.

Boarding the flight to Dallas, my mind raced, my stomach churned. What could I do?

As I buckled my seat belt, I sensed the Lord gently ask, “Daughter, whose job is it to provide for you?”

I exhaled, “Yours, Lord.”

Peace flooded in.

When I exited the plane in Dallas, I noticed a mobile column listing upcoming Southwest flights. I’d never seen them do that before. When I looked to discover the gate for my next flight, I saw there were two flights listed to Denver. One of the flights, two gates over, was getting ready to depart in three minutes!

I raced to the counter, “Is there any way I can get on this earlier flight?”

The plane was packed, but one seat remained unclaimed. The Southwest agent gave it to me!

While boarding, I asked the woman in front of me, “What time does this flight arrive in Denver?”

She replied: “7:45” — the exact time I was originally scheduled to arrive.

When I looked at the boarding pass, I discovered I only made that flight because it had been delayed by six minutes!

Did the Father ever take care of this daughter! I felt so loved!

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- Reflection:

Describe a time when you were aware of being God’s child.

What difference does it make when you are aware of this not only in your head but especially in your heart?

TACKLE N' TRUST

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## CHAPTER 1

God's Promise of Salvation  
John 1:12-13

To all who did receive him,  
who believed in his name,  
he gave the right to become children of God  
who were born,  
not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,  
nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 1:12-13

This is such a foundational promise! Because the promises of God were made to the children of God.

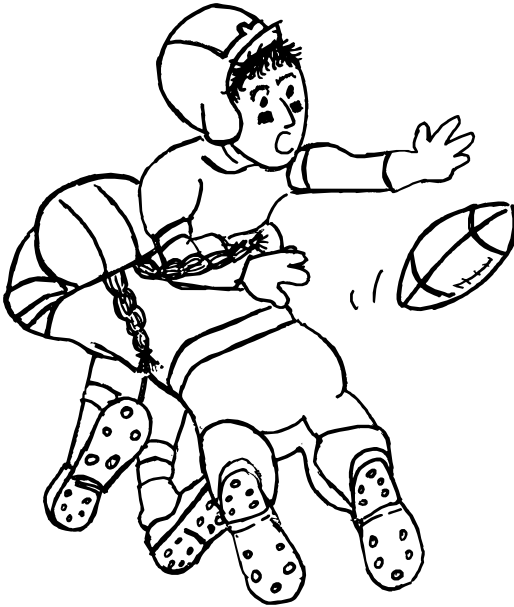
If I say, "I'm going to bring a cake for Jean next week," would you expect me to bring one for you? Not if you aren't, Jean!

In the same way, there are a lot of promises in Scripture given to specific individuals. At Christmas, we remember the angel saying to Mary, "You will conceive and give birth to a son." This is a promise to Mary. Sometimes, the Lord impresses on someone's heart, "This verse is true for you, too. I'm giving this to you as a promise." But everyone struggling with infertility can't claim this promise as being for them. The Lord specifically gave this promise to Mary, the mother of Jesus.

There are specific promises and general promises. We'll be looking at general promises: those promises God makes to every single person who is His child. But before you start claiming these promises, it's important to clarify: Are you God's child? According to this verse, if you have received Jesus and believed in His name, He has given you the right to become His child.

Your right to all the rest of the promises God made to His children rests on the reality of this one.

# TACKLE!



## 1. Memorize this verse!

Pray! Ask the Lord to help you memorize this verse for life!

I like to start by writing the verse on a 3X5 card as pictured on the preceding page.

As you learn a verse, it is essential to quote the topic and reference at the beginning and then repeat the reference at the end. That way, when someone is helping you review, they can give you the topic without giving the location or first part of the verse away. State the reference twice because it is generally the hardest to recall.

Memorize one phrase at a time, adding to this bit by bit as you get each new addition down. For example, start with “God’s Promise of Salvation, John 1:12.” (When I am learning a verse with someone, we go back and forth using what we’ve written on the index card to check each other.) Then add the first phrase: “God’s Promise of Salvation, John 1:12, **But to all who did receive him.**”

As soon as we can both state the topic, reference, and first phrase word-perfect, we add another phrase, again taking turns saying it. “God’s Promise of Salvation, John 1:12 But to all who did receive him, **who believed in his name.**” Don’t add more until you have that down solid!

Repeat this process until you’ve memorized the entire verse.

If you’re having trouble, get creative! You can use hand motions or even draw pictures. One friend told me she couldn’t memorize. I made up a song, putting the verse to music on the spot. (You better believe I was asking the Lord for help!) She not only learned it, she went home and taught it to her younger sister!

Now here’s the most crucial thing to remember: Though you can quote the entire verse, you don’t yet have it memorized! That doesn’t happen until you’ve quoted it out loud word-perfect 100 times! I make a grid on the back of my card with columns for each day in the next week, leaving room to check off, quoting it ten to fifteen times daily. Yes, it requires intentionality to do this! But is it ever worth the effort to invest in memorizing it well. It will be with you for the rest of your life! And don’t forget, you can have fun asking



random people, even in the checkout line at the grocery store, to listen to you quote your verse. You never know how the Lord might use His Word!

## 2. Seek to understand this verse!

### “To all who did receive Him...”

To who?

| Read the following verses and consider... | Who didn't receive Him? | Why didn't they receive Him? | What can this look like today? |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| John 1:11                                 |                         |                              |                                |
| Mark 6:2-4                                |                         |                              |                                |
| John 7:5                                  |                         |                              |                                |
| John 5:16, 39-44                          |                         |                              |                                |

So what does it mean to “receive Him?”

## “who believe in His name...”

Consider  
James  
2:18-20

But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless?

What does it mean to believe?

How are receiving and believing different?

What has this looked like in your life?

Consider  
Ephesians  
2:8-10

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

NOTE: In the book of John the Greek word for *believe* πιστευω is used 98 times — and only appears as a verb. Believing is not something you just do mentally; it impacts how you act.

## **“He gave the right to become children of God...”**

According to this verse, what does God give? What does this mean?

Were you adopted, or do you know someone who was? What do you know about this process? How does this help you understand what it means to be given the “right” to be God’s child?

Read the following verses and consider, how does this reality impact your relationship to God’s promises?

|                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |  |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| Acts<br>2:38-39          | And Peter said to them, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself.” |  |
| Galatians<br>3:28-29     | There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.                                                                                        |  |
| Ephesians<br>3:6         | This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.                                                                                                                                                                   |  |
| 2<br>Corinthians<br>1:20 | For all the promises of God find their Yes in him. That is why it is through him that we utter our Amen to God for his glory.                                                                                                                                                                                    |  |

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                                                   |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>“Who were born not of blood”</b>   | Consider John 3:3-6<br>Jesus answered him, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. | What do you think it means to be born “not of blood”?             |
| <b>“Nor of the will of the flesh”</b> | Ephesians 2:8-9<br>For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast..                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | What do you think it means to be born “of the will of the flesh”? |
| <b>"nor of the will of man”</b>       | Romans 3:11 NIV<br>There is no one who understands; there is no one who seeks God.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | What do you think it means to be born ”of the will of man”?       |
| <b>“but of God.”</b>                  | John 6:44.<br>“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | What do you think it means to be born of God?                     |

What do you learn about God from this verse?

The phrase “born of God” occurs frequently in 1 John, a book in which John states, “I write these things to you who believe in the name of the son of God so that you might know that you have eternal life.” According to John, what can help us **know** we have eternal life? What evidence do you see of each of these in your life?

1 John 2:29 If you know that He is *absolutely* righteous, you know [for certain] that everyone who practices righteousness [doing what is right and conforming to God's will] has been born of Him.

1 John 3:9 No one who is born of God [deliberately, knowingly, and habitually] practices sin, because God's seed [His principle of life, the essence of His righteous character] remains [permanently] in him [who is born again—who is reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, and set apart for His purpose]; and he [who is born again] cannot *habitually* [live a life characterized by] sin, because he is born of God *and* longs to please Him.

1 John 4:7 Beloved, let us [unselfishly] love *and* seek the best for one another, for love is from God; and everyone who loves [others] is born of God and knows God [through personal experience].

1 John 5:1 Everyone who believes [with a deep, abiding trust in the fact] that Jesus is the Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed) is born of God [that is, reborn from above—spiritually transformed, renewed, and set apart for His purpose], and everyone who loves the Father also loves the *child* born of Him.

1 John 5:3-5 For the [true] love of God is this: that we *habitually* keep His commandments *and* remain focused on His precepts. And His commandments *and* His precepts are not difficult [to obey]. For everyone born of God is victorious *and* overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has conquered *and* overcome the world—our [continuing, persistent] faith [in Jesus the Son of God]. Who is the one who is victorious *and* overcomes the world? It is the one who believes *and* recognizes the fact that Jesus is the Son of God.

1 John 5:18 We know [with confidence] that anyone born of God does not *habitually* sin; but He (Jesus) who was born of God [carefully] keeps *and* protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.



## TRUST!

What difference can it make in your life to know you are a child of God, and because of this, God has given you a bunch of promises so you can know Him experientially and become more like Him, and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires?

What does God want you to do in response to this?

(Note: This doesn't have to be a big, fancy application. It can even be thanking Him for what He's done in your life. But wise is the person who takes time to actively respond after reading God's Word! Check out Matthew 7:24-27 to see what a HUGE difference this can make in your life!)

# PROMISE BASED LIVING

(A true story!)

As a new student leader on her campus, Elaine was excited. She couldn't wait to head out and meet freshmen, to share with them the good news of Jesus, and invite them to Navs. True, there were a few butterflies in her stomach. What if someone asked her something she didn't know? Or reacted negatively? But she'd been practicing the Bridge illustration with friends for the past few days. Might as well dive in the deep end right away!

Elaine loved being part of the Navigators. She hadn't known anyone when she'd come to college two years prior. One night, she heard people singing in the student center. The song sounded familiar, so she decided to poke her head in. That night, she'd found her tribe.

Having grown up in a Christian home, she was delighted to connect with a community so quickly. She couldn't wait to bless other students the way she'd been blessed.

When she saw a young girl heading her way, Elaine called out, "Hi! Would you be interested in taking a spiritual interest survey and being entered into a drawing to win Chick-fil-A for a year?" When the student agreed, Elaine went through the questions and then asked if she'd like to see a brief illustration summarizing the main message of the Bible. When the student nodded, Elaine dove in... and Elaine's life was never the same!

As Elaine shared the Bridge illustration with this student, she realized for the first time she'd never received Jesus' gift of salvation herself! With each verse she quoted to the freshman, she became increasingly aware that the Holy Spirit was speaking those same words in her heart, inviting her to respond to Jesus.

She'd known a lot about Jesus but never come to know him personally. As she shared, the gospel blinders were suddenly removed from her eyes! When Elaine prayed with this freshman to receive Christ, she was praying along with her, surrendering herself. That day, Elaine became a new creation in Christ while sharing the gospel with another student.

Elaine shared with me later, "I'd intellectually agreed with facts about Jesus and thought that was what being a Christian was all about, but it wasn't until that moment I realized I'd never welcomed and submitted to him in a personal relationship! I could talk the talk with the best of them! I knew the Christian lingo. But then Jesus offered Himself to me, and it wasn't until I welcomed him into my life that everything changed. I became a child of God!"

What thoughts come to mind as you consider this story?  
How does this story connect with your story?

## CREATIVE REVIEW

One fun way to review your verse is to write it out beautifully. Veteran Navigator Staff Debbie Friley shares one way to do this below. You can write over the top of what she's done or grab some tracing paper and have fun learning a bit of calligraphy as you review.

BUT TO ALL WHO DID RECEIVE  
HIM, WHO BELIEVED IN HIS NAME, HE GAVE  
THE RIGHT TO BECOME CHILDREN  
OF GOD, WHO WERE

JOHN 1:12-13  
**Born**

NOT OF BLOOD NOR THE  
WILL OF THE FLESH NOR OF  
THE WILL OF MAN,  
BUT  
OF GOD.



# TIME IN GOD'S WORD

*A Heart That Belongs*

JOHN 1:12-13

Read the following verses, which focus on different aspects of being a child of God. Underline anything that stands out to you:

That was the true light which shines upon every man as he comes into the world. He came into the world—the world he had created—and the world failed to recognise him. He came into his own creation, and his own people would not accept him. Yet wherever men did accept him he gave them the power to become sons of God. These were the men who truly believed in him, and their birth depended not on the course of nature nor on any impulse or plan of man, but on God. John 1:9-13 (Phillips)

For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Galatians 3:26 (NLT)

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is. 1 John 3:2 (ESV)

"I will be a Father to you, And you shall be My sons and daughters, Says the LORD Almighty." 2 Corinthians 6:18 (NKJV)

"Are not five sparrows sold for two cents? Yet not one of them is forgotten before God. "Indeed, the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear; you are more valuable than many sparrows. Luke 12:6-7 (NASB)

For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, "Abba! Father!" 16The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him. Romans 8:15-16 (NASB)

"I will say to the north, 'Give them up!' And to the south, 'Do not hold them back.' Bring My sons from afar And My daughters from the ends of the earth, Everyone who is called by My name, And whom I have created for My glory, Whom I have formed, even whom I have made." Isaiah 43:6-7 (NASB)

LOOK: Select one verse (or portion of a verse) to focus on and record it here:

LISTEN: Why did you select this verse? Journal your thoughts as you ponder this verse with the Lord.

LIVE IT OUT: How does this verse connect with your life? How do you sense the Lord inviting you to respond to what He's laid on your heart?

LET IT LAST: Draw a quick picture of your main highlight from this time with the Lord.

# MEMORIZING FOR LIFE

When do you have a verse memorized? It's not when you can quote it!

There is short-term memory and long-term memory. You can memorize something short-term in just a few minutes – and forget it just as easily! But for a verse to truly be memorized long-term you need to have quoted it word perfect 70 times! Three times a day for a month will just about get you there!

And you are much more likely to remember something that is significant to you.

This is why I love to memorize verses with those I meet with. I have found getting off to a good start can really help someone succeed in developing this discipline.

1. When the Lord lays it on my heart to have someone memorize a verse, we start our time together praying, asking the Lord to help us not only memorize the verse but also understand it and give us wisdom to know how it can make a difference in our life.

2. Next we read through the verse in context and then break it into phrases. You can have so much fun with this – bring colored pens and have them create word art on a 3×5 card. It's amazing when you create a visual like this how it can help start you remembering.

3. Then we tackle memorizing the first phrase. We go back and forth repeating it to each other, taking turns being the reviewer – and note when you are serving as reviewer make sure you are looking at your card so you're certain you're memorizing the right words. In the midst of repeating one can easily make mistakes!!! (Even when the verse has been memorized for over thirty years! ;0)

If someone struggles with memorizing, I will ask the Lord to give creative ideas – either a rhythm or a song or sometimes we'll use sign language. It's amazing how helpful this can be! With one student, a dancer, she found choreographing the verse really helped her. Did she ever get a great workout reviewing! :0)

4. Only after she has quoted the first phrase word perfect a couple times, will we move onto the next phrase. We'll seek to learn that second phrase then add it onto the first phrase and keep going back and forth saying those two phrases together. Hearing and saying are both helpful – but again, when you are reviewing make sure you're looking at the card!!!

5. If she's a kinesthetic learner we may even move around learning each phrase in a different place (this is really helpful with kids! But you'd be surprised at how even college students love this!) You need to be thorough, but you don't want it to be boring.

7. So you keep adding on one phrase at a time, not stopping until the whole verse can be quoted word perfect.

8. Then we go back to the first phrase and start asking questions about it. The goal here is to really understand what the verse says... and what it doesn't!

For example, when memorizing John 16:24, "Until now you have not asked for anything in my name, ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete" For that middle phrase I'll ask, "Receive what?" And how would it be different if the verse read, "and you will receive what you ask for?" "So what is the Lord promising here?!"

9. And I'll share different cross references that can help us understand this part of the verse even more. For example, James 1:17 states "Every good and perfect gift comes from above..."

It's vital she understands that God is the giver of good gifts. Yet we don't always know what's good. So there's a real safety in this. God promises whenever we ask, we will receive... something! And because He is good, it will be good! But if we ask for something that's not good, we'll still receive – you never leave the Lord empty handed! – but because He loves us and protects us it may not be what we ask for. But whatever it is will bring us joy!

10. Each time we move to the next phrase I'll have her review me saying the whole verse and then review her saying it. By the time our one on one is finished, she is off to a good start towards quoting that verse 100 times!

11. The most important part of our time comes at the end when we each determine how we can apply the verse in our life during the coming week. This is so critical! Because once someone starts experiencing first hand the value of this verse lived out, that's one of the strongest motivators for memorizing scripture ever!

This is why I don't start with a lengthy discussion of why she should memorize, instead we dive in and let her discover this for herself!

12. And we always start our time the next week sharing what happened as a result of our application!

So there are two assignments I give whenever I do this with someone – one is to do the application she's come up with. The other is to keep reviewing the verse.

But it's vital neither assignment be vague. (check out the previous post on how to make your assignments SMART) Remember the goal is to review it 100 times so it's lodged in her long term memory! No one makes that goal without intentionality! So I ask her to review her verse three times a day every day and we create boxes! :0) You can do this on an index card or an iphone! Work with her to determine what will work for her. And I really encourage you to do it with her!

Scripture memory is one of those things that seems so easy initially ~ just memorizing a verse, especially a short verse isn't that difficult ~ but remembering it for life takes much more

intentionality and effort! Yet I have found over and over the effort is so worth it! Because when applied, when you live out what you're memorizing, it really does add life to your life because you don't just know in your head that God's Word is more precious than silver, you've experienced the incredible value of it first hand!

# HEART TO HEART



## *A Heart That Responds*

WEEK 2: JOHN 16:24

### **H**EAR:

Share a story of a time when you asked God for something. What happened?

### **E**XPLORE:

Watch: Treasure from Jean

Journal: Reflection questions at the end of each video

Discuss

Read: (select one)

1. Do chapter two in Tackle n Trust – Memorize, Understand, Apply
2. Time In God's Word - Share a Quiet Time in John 16:12-24

## **A**PPLY:

Discuss: What do you sense Jesus inviting you to do in response?

Creatively Process - create a special list (You can use colored card stock, markers, watercolors, etc) where you can record on one side requests you are asking God this week, then on the other side leave space for his answers (remember "I have something better for you is also an answer" so if the Lord upscales your prayer be sure to record that too!)

## **R**EMEMBER :

Discuss: What Highlights stood out to you today

## **T**ELL A FRIEND:

PRAY: Share with Jesus what you're thankful for from this time

PASS IT ON: Who might you be able to share this with? What could it look like for you to do this?

# TACKLE N' TRUST

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CHAPTER 2

God's Promise of Answered Prayer
John 16:24

Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

John 16:24

Want more joy in your life? Then this is the promise for you! Here, Jesus is making the most astounding promise ever! "Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full." He didn't have to do this. He never had to promise this. But he does! Do you realize God wants you to have joy in your life? And not just a little joy . . . He wants to live a life *full* of joy! And through this promise, He is making it possible.

But this verse illustrates how vital it is to know what God is promising and what He isn't.

Does this verse mean if I ask for a Porsche, I'll get one?!

If we misunderstand what God has promised it can negatively impact our trust of Him in a big way. This is why it's so important we not only know the promise but understand it.

Also, it's important to note this is a conditional promise. Some promises God makes (like Hebrews 13:5, "I will never leave you or forsake you") are always true, regardless of what we do or don't do. But this one is conditional because it requires us to do something to experience it - we need to ask!

If I do this:		Then God will do this:		And this will happen:
Ask	—>	you will receive	—>	joy to the full!

Ready to dive into this treasure?!



TACKLE!

1. Memorize this verse!

Write the verse down on a 3" x 5" card with the topic, reference, verse, and then the reference again.

Pray! Ask the Lord to help you memorize this verse for life.

Memorize it a phrase at a time. It may seem silly to do this, but remember the story of the tortoise and the hare? Slow and steady wins the race! Each time you repeat the verse, it makes an impression in your brain. Think of being at the beach and drawing a circle in the sand. Every time you go over the circle, the impression gets deeper.

This is why it's so critical that you quote a verse word perfectly every time. If you didn't, it would be like making a different circle in the sand that deviates from the original. That doesn't make the impression go deeper; it creates another circle!

So be sure to take your time. Don't move on to add another phrase until you can quote the previous part word-perfect at least a couple of times!

"God's Promise of Answered Prayer"

"God's Promise of Answered Prayer, John 16:24"

"God's Promise of Answered Prayer, John 16:24, Until now."

"God's Promise of Answered Prayer, John 16:24 Until now you have asked nothing."

"God's Promise of Answered Prayer, John 16:24 Until now you have asked nothing in my name."

"God's Promise of Answered Prayer, John 16:24, Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive."

“God’s Promise of Answered Prayer, John 16:24, Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive that your joy”

God’s Promise of Answered Prayer, John 16:24, Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive that your joy may be full.”

“God’s Promise of Answered Prayer, John 16:24, Until now you have asked nothing in my name, ask and you will receive that your joy may be full. John 16:24”

Remember to create a grid on the back of your index card and check off each time someone helps you review your verses aloud.



This week's goal:
quote John 16:24 word perfect 100 times,
and review John 1:12-13 once a day too.

2. Seek to understand this verse!

“Until now”

Why hadn't they done this before? Read John 16:1-24 and consider this verse in its context. Why do you think Jesus is saying this now?

“you have asked nothing in my name.”

What does it mean to ask for something in Jesus' name? Why is this important?

The Check Analogy

Let's say I wrote you a check but I didn't sign it. Would you be able to cash it without my signature?

“Ask, and you will receive,”

What does God specifically promise here? Does it say, ask and you will receive *exactly* what you ask for?

How might the following two passages shed light on what God will give us?

James 1:17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change.

Matthew 7:7 “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. **8** For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. **9** Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? **10** Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? **11** If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!

According to these verses, what kind of gifts does God give?

What happens if you ask for something that looks good, but God knows it won't be good for you?

There are three ways God answers when we ask:

1. Yes!
2. Wait. *(Note the verse doesn't say "receive right away."
Timing can be critical in whether something is good or not.)*
3. I have something better for you!

There is enormous protection built into this verse. Would you want God to give you what you ask for if it wasn't good for you?

But there's another huge blessing, too. Through this verse, God reveals that we never come away empty-handed when we ask Him for something. He won't give us what we ask for if it isn't good--but He will give us something good every time we ask!

How incredible is that? What thoughts come to mind as you consider this?

"that your joy may be full."

So you ask and then receive something good. How might you experience joy as a result?

Remember how God's promises are so vital for us to experience Him? How might the following verse shed light on this?

You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures
forevermore.

Psalm 16:11



TRUST!

What difference can it make to know that God has promised to give you something good every time you ask Him for something?

What difference can it make to know you never have to worry about asking for the wrong thing? Because if what you ask for isn't good, the Lord won't give it to you; instead, He will give you something else that genuinely is good.

What do you sense the Lord wants you to do in response to this?

(Remember, when you act on God's promises, practically applying them in your life, you not only get to experience the promise being fulfilled, but even better, you have the opportunity to experientially get to know God better as the Faithful One and grow in trusting Him and experience the benefits in 2 Peter 1: 4! So how can you practically take God up on His promise in John 16:24?)

Seek to Make Your Application **SMART**

S = Specific. (What specifically do you sense the Lord leading you to do?)

M = Measurable (How will you know whether you've done it or not?)

A = Accountable (Is there someone you could ask to encourage you by inquiring how you're doing on your application? I find this a HUGE help!)

R = Realistic (E.g., don't try to memorize a whole chapter in one day! Slow and steady wins the race.)

T = Timely (Don't select something you'll do far in the future. One of my friends suggests starting with something you can do in five minutes, and within the next 24 hours.)

PROMISE BASED LIVING

(A true story!)

One day, while walking with my friend Keziah, she handed me a crumpled piece of paper. Scratched in the middle were the words, “I don’t know if I can trust God anymore.” With tears streaming down her face, she whispered, “I can’t bear to say it, but...”. She sighed. “I don’t know what to do.”

We met thirty years prior when Keziah was a senior in high school. She had recently entered into a personal relationship with Jesus and wanted to share him with everyone she met! I’d just returned from Urbana, Illinois, where I had attended a week-long mission conference. She’d come to my house to spend the night with my sister. We stayed up half the night talking.

Keziah shared she was planning to attend a Christian college, but when she heard about the Navigators, she decided to join me at the University of Florida. Throughout college, her love and excitement for Jesus were infectious!

After graduating, she landed her dream job, working for a major relief organization, traveling the world, writing million-dollar grants, then creating and evaluating programs to help impoverished moms and their children. The brokenness, suffering, and desolation she witnessed during the next few decades began to wear and overwhelm her. Going from one grant to the next, without taking time to process, took a deadly toll on her heart and her relationship with God.

Her work “for God” crowded out her being with God. While tackling malnourishment problems in third-world countries, she’d become “spiritually malnourished” and felt distant from the Lord.

So we began to meet for tea each week, enjoying time together in God’s Word. One day, after sharing God’s Promise of Answered Prayer in John 16:24, I showed her my prayer cards. I love to walk and pray, flipping through verses and requests, lifting them before God’s throne.

Keziah went home that day and created a prayer stack, putting a hole in the corner of each 3X5 card and holding it together with a silver ring. As she began to pray through these requests, the answers to prayer she was getting to record were incredible! As she did this, her trust in God began to grow.

One day, as we talked, she shared, “I think God is leading me to quit my job...”. This is a job she dearly loves! When I asked what she was afraid of, she shared, “Not having enough money for my kids’ college.” I challenged her to put that on her prayer card. She did, then quit her job.

Want to guess whose kids both received full scholarships to college?

In the past eight years, Keziah’s accumulated quite a few sets of prayer cards, all filled with answers to prayer (my hearing being restored was one of these!). And she continues to pass on to others what’s helped her relationship with the Lord return to one of robust health!

Best of all, she now confidently declares her trust in the Lord, and is her joy ever being made full!

CREATIVE REVIEW

Ready for another creative challenge? In addition to copying Debbie Friley's beautiful calligraphy this week, here is an idea from Shini Abraham, who serves on staff with YWAM. Duco Divina is where you creatively doodle while you meditate on a verse, drawing the same shape repeatedly. When Shini developed chronic pain, she found she struggled to be still and meditate on God's Word. But then the Lord gave her the idea to doodle while contemplating a verse. Whatever you do, be sure to add the reference for the verse! Can you remember it without looking?

You can learn more about Duco Divina here: <http://duco.ducodivina.com/about/>

UNTIL NOW YOU HAVE
ASKED NOTHING
IN MY NAME.

Ask

AND YOU WILL RECEIVE,
THAT YOUR
JOY MAY BE FULL.

TIME IN GOD'S WORD

Week 3: A Heart That Responds ~ Consider The Context

FOCUS: JOHN 16:12-24

“I still have many things to tell you, but you can’t handle them now. But when the Friend comes, the Spirit of the Truth, he will take you by the hand and guide you into all the truth there is. He won’t draw attention to himself, but will make sense out of what is about to happen and, indeed, out of all that I have done and said. He will honor me; he will take from me and deliver it to you. Everything the Father has is also mine. That is why I’ve said, ‘He takes from me and delivers to you.’”

“In a day or so you’re not going to see me, but then in another day or so you will see me.” That stirred up a hornet’s nest of questions

among the disciples: “What’s he talking about: ‘In a day or so you’re not going to see me, but then in another day or so you will see me’? And, ‘Because I’m on my way to the Father’? What is this ‘day or so’? We don’t know what he’s talking about.”

Jesus knew they were dying to ask him what he meant, so he said, “Are you trying to figure out among yourselves what I meant when I said, ‘In a day or so you’re not going to see me, but then in another day or so you will see me’? Then fix this firmly in your minds: You’re going to be in deep mourning while the godless world throws a party. You’ll be sad, very sad, but your sadness will develop into gladness.

“When a woman gives birth, she has a hard time, there’s no getting around it. But when the baby is born, there is joy in the birth. This new life in the world wipes out memory of the pain. The sadness you have right now is similar to that pain, but the coming joy is also similar. When I see you again, you’ll be full of joy, and it will be a joy no one can rob from you. You’ll no longer be so full of questions.

“This is what I want you to do: Ask the Father for whatever is in keeping with the things I’ve revealed to you. Ask in my name, according to my will, and he’ll most certainly give it to you. Your joy will be a river overflowing its banks! John 16:12-24 (MSG)

LOOK: Select one verse (or portion of a verse) to focus on and record it here:

LISTEN: Why did you select this verse? Journal your thoughts as you ponder this verse with the Lord.

LIVE IT OUT: How does this verse connect with your life? How do you sense the Lord inviting you to respond to what He's laid on your heart regarding this verse?

LET IT LAST: Draw a quick picture to illustrate the main thing that stood out to you.

KEEP IT SIMPLE, SWEETIE

There is not only one way to enjoy a quiet time or do scripture memory or pray or spend extended time alone with the Lord. Different methods work for different people at different times.

However, when you are first teaching someone how to do something, it is wise to show them one way. Later on, you can teach them alternative methods or tweak what you showed them to better suit their personality and preferences.

But if you try to show more than one method at a time, this can add confusion, and what you've intended to help can end up being a hindrance as they then have to choose what to start with before they even start.

As they say with the old acronym KISS: Keep it simple, sweetie!

How do you select which method to start with?

I usually begin passing on what's worked best for me. I'm sharing what's impacted me and helped me the most. Whether it's what will ultimately work best for them or not, I am letting them see more of my walk with Jesus – and that is so important.

But there are exceptions to starting this way– especially if someone struggles with a handicap.

Once, my husband was meeting with a guy who seemed eager to get together and grow, but whenever Jim would challenge him to read something, even the Bible, on his own, he never did. It was perplexing.

Then we learned he had an extreme case of dyslexia and couldn't read. This required adjustments. Once that came to light, Jim encouraged him to listen to the Word. What a difference that made.

Don't follow a set plan, follow Jesus.

It also helps if the first method you teach is well-organized and easy to remember. Not only does this help her know how to do it the next day when she is on her own, but she is more likely to pass on something simple.

For example, when I teach women how to enjoy a quiet time I follow the outline: Look, Listen, Live It Out (*you can read more about this in the Helps section*). It's not that this is the only way, but it's what I've been doing for thirty years and benefiting greatly from! Plus, it's simple and easy to remember and still covers the three key parts I have found so vital for being transformed by my time with Jesus – focusing, meditating, and application.

Over and over I am amazed at how many women, after just sharing one quiet time with me turn around and do this with someone else! I truly have found the more simple, organized and memorable something is the more likely it is to be passed on. This is key for discipling generationally!!!

And please note, keeping it simple, isn't just of value when you are meeting one on one with someone – if you are ever asked to give a workshop, keep it simple! I can't tell you how many times I've met with students after they've attended introductory workshops on a spiritual discipline and they never got around to doing it because they were immobilized by all the options.

Instead, whether you're doing a workshop or showing a woman one on one take time to do the discipline together! Don't just tell how to do something! Model it and let it be experienced... and be amazed at how much more likely people are to do this on their own after actually doing it with you!

And, if possible, don't just do it with her once. We live in an information based society – where we're always seeking something new. And it's easy when discipling to think – I've showed her once, now let's move onto the next topic. Remember it takes six weeks for something to become a habit. Since the goal isn't for her to know about spiritual disciplines, but to do them so she can be transformed as the Lord works through them, you have to take this into account!

It is not uncommon for me to dedicate at least six weeks (if not double!) focusing on one spiritual discipline. Yep! All we focus on week after week is doing that one discipline together, helping her not just learn how to do it, but giving opportunity for it to be incorporated into her life.

For this to happen there not only needs to be repetition, she also needs time to experience the life changing benefit of doing this so she'll be motivated to keep doing it even after we've moved on to something else – or when I'm no longer around!

So keep it simple, sweetie! This simple principle really can help you – and those you're meeting with get off to a good start!

HEART TO HEART



A Heart for Battle

FOCUS: 1 CORINTHIANS 10:13

HEAR

1. What did you ask God for this past week? What answers to prayer did you experience?
2. Be ready to share your answers to prayer, too.

1. Review verses together:

1. How did it go reviewing the verses throughout the week?

1. Note: be careful not to let this be shaming if she hasn't reviewed, I like to share the example of a baby learning how to walk. Remember parents rejoice whenever a step forward is taken, they expect they child will fall down.
2. I like to share how it helps me to consider what got in the way of me doing what I planned to do. What can I learn from it and how that can help me keep growing in the future. Ask what did she learn from this past week. Share how your reviewing went and how these verses as you are remembering them are impacting your life.

3. Celebrate any steps forward.
2. Get out your verse cards and have them in hand as you check each other. Let her check you first.
 1. John 1:12-13
 2. John 16:24

EXPLORE

1. When you think about temptation what comes to mind? (either select a photo from the image gallery or have her sketch a quick picture, and you sketch one, too)
2. Why did you select that picture? (each of you share)

Memorize

1. Create a Verse Card
 1. Write on a 3x5 card the Title: God's Promise of Help in Temptation
 2. Then write the Reference: 1 Corinthians 10:13
 3. Write the verse phrase by phrase
 4. The write the Reference again at the bottom of the card: 1 Corinthians 10:13
2. Memorize the Verse

Time In God's Word

1. Chapter 3 Tackle N' Trust
 1. What has God promised?
 2. What is our part?

APPLY

1. What can it look like for you to take God up on this promise?
2. Share what it looks like for you, too!

REMEMBER

1. Review 1 Corinthians 10:13 ten times each day out loud
2. Keep reviewing John 1:12-13 and John 16:24 once a day this week

TELL A FRIEND

PRAY: Share with Jesus what you're thankful for from this time

PASS IT ON: Who might you be able to share this with? What could it look like for you to do this?

TACKLE N' TRUST

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## CHAPTER 3

God's Promise of Help in Temptation  
1 Corinthians 10:13

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it.

1 Corinthians 10:13

Here is one of the promises I turn to most often. Memorize this verse, and do you ever get bang for your buck - - it contains not just one but two promises!

This is an example of a promise that is always true whether you take God up on His offer or not. It is based on His faithfulness and His incredible love for us.

Do you remember the armor of God described in Ephesians 6? Claiming this promise in 1 Corinthians 10:13 is one key way to use the Sword of the Spirit--the Word of God--to help defend yourself in the heat of spiritual warfare. And since we have an enemy prowling around like a roaring lion looking to see who He can devour (1 Peter 5:8), we have many opportunities to experience God through these promises!

The enemy is so sneaky--he loves to make us feel no one has ever struggled as much as us and then whisper, "Go on, just do it. You know you're going to give in eventually. . . ."

Now imagine being in the midst of a battle with such a formidable foe and having to say, "Wait. Hold on there, just a minute. I need to find my Bible and that promise that can help me." Do you think Satan honors timeouts?

That's why memorizing these promises is so crucial to being able to use them. When they are stored in your brain and embraced in your heart, they are available for the Holy Spirit to bring to mind right when you need them . . . and help you be victorious! Ready to tackle this one?



## TACKLE!

### 1. Memorize this verse!

Pray! Ask the Lord to help you memorize for life! This isn't a rote exercise.

Scripture Memory is one of the most difficult spiritual disciplines to do effectively, so it makes perfect sense to ask the Lord to make His grace abound so you can memorize this verse well.

And remember how important this verse can be to help you in spiritual warfare? It should come as no surprise that the enemy does *not* want you memorizing this verse. He will do all he can to distract, sidetrack, or thwart you. Never forget that you are in a battle that rages 24/7. What a blessing it is to know that greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world (1 John 4:4)!

Remember to take your time and learn the verse phrase by phrase. When I do this while meeting one-on-one with someone, we start our time here and don't stop until we both quote the verse word perfectly. This gets them off to a solid start and is a helpful review for me.

Don't forget to create a grid on the back of your cards to help you review the verse 15 times each day until you've quoted it word perfectly aloud to someone 70 to 100 times. And please note that doing this aloud to someone is essential. It's so easy to think, *I'll quote it in my head and that should be enough*. But, sadly, it isn't. Repeating it aloud to someone each of those 100 times helps your brain to store it better.

### 2. Seek to Understand the verse

*"No temptation has overtaken you"*

What is temptation?

The Greek word translated *temptation* here, πειρασμός, refers to an experiment, attempt, trial, or proving. It can refer to an enticement to sin from either internal desires or external circumstances, or it can refer to adversity, affliction, or trouble sent by God to test or prove one's character, faith, or holiness. In James 1:13 we are clearly told God never tempts anyone but He does allow trials to give us opportunity to grow.



What are some temptations you struggle with?

How many of them does this verse apply to?

*“except what is common to man”*

According to this verse, are you the only one facing this struggle?

*“God is faithful”*

What does this mean? When you think of God being faithful, what comes to mind?

What difference can knowing this make in your life?

One of my favorite verses  
is James 1:17:

*“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.” (NIV)*

When my son was little he started a club called “he Knowing God Better Club” where each week we considered a different attribute of God. One week as we were studying this verse I grabbed a flashlight and had all the boys crowd into a dark room and shine the flashlight on me. “What happens to my shadow when I get down really low?” The boys yelled, “It gets tiny!” Then I stood up as tall as I could with my hands in the air, “What’s happened to my shadow now?” and they yelled “It’s super big!” And I shared, “Do you see, God isn’t like my shadow. He’s not down when I’m down or up when I’m up. He doesn’t change like a shifting shadow! No matter what I do, He is constant--faithful in loving me and in keeping His promises. He does what He says He will do!

*“and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability”*

Here is the first promise! What do you learn here?

What would your life be like if God didn't do this?

How can knowing this help you when you are tempted?

NOTE: If you ever want to “see” this promise in action, go read the first couple chapters of Job. Can the enemy do anything he wants to Job? What do you notice about God here?

*“but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape,”*

Here's the second promise! What has God promised to do for you when you are tempted?

Can you think of a time when God did this for you?

*“that you may be able to endure it.”*

Why does God provide this way of escape?

Why do you think it says “that you may” rather than “that you will?” (NOTE: This is important for noting what God has and hasn't promised! You have a part to play here, don't you? What is your part?)

Imagine a scenario where you are being tempted. What could it look like for you to pray this promise?

How can knowing this promise help you when you are being tempted?

Even more than helping you when you are tempted, how can knowing this verse help you to personally experience God being faithful?

One thing I absolutely love about this promise - even if I blow it, even if I don't take the way out God provides, if I still look back and identify the way out he provided (that knock at the door or phone call, etc...) I still have experienced Him being faithful to do what He said He'd do! Even in my failure I can grow in trusting Him!



## TRUST!

What difference can it make in your life to know that:

...You aren't the only one struggling with this temptation?

....God won't let you be tempted beyond what you can bear?

...When you are tempted God will provide a way out so you can endure it?

What does God want you to do in response to this?

Have you ever come up with a great application but never got around to doing it? It can be so helpful to not only write down what I intend to do but also to go back and write down what I did and what happened as a result!

Why not give this a try this week in the space to the right?

What I did:

What happened as a result:

## PROMISE BASED LIVING

(A true story!)

After kayaking for four glorious hours exploring all the inlets along the Braden River, enjoying sweet time with Jesus singing His praises while memorizing His word, I noticed a street that looked familiar. Pulling out my phone to take a picture so I could check it when driving home, I saw a text I'd been waiting for had come in.

For four years, I'd helped train all new incoming staff. A change in leadership occurred that year, and I'd been warned things might change. I was waiting to hear whether I needed to book a flight to Colorado.

The last time I'd been out there, I'd been recruited to handle a difficult situation. After the Lord abundantly blessed I was asked if I'd be willing to keep helping, so I expected my involvement would continue. Months passed, and I didn't hear anything, so I decided to take the initiative to ask if my help was still wanted.

In the text, I learned it wasn't. I was surprised. But deep peace flooded my heart as I looked up, reminded of 1 Corinthians 10:13. "You're protecting me from being tempted beyond what I can bear, aren't you?!"

In truth, the last time I'd done this training, I'd thought, "Usually, the Lord doesn't have me do the same thing twice, and it's now been four years, four times presenting the same introductory workshops at the summit." God created me to be an activator, to get new things started, not to be an expert or trainer who does the same thing repeatedly.

In truth, I probably would've kept doing the four-hour workshops year after year because I believed they were so strategic. I loved the opportunity to help new staff women understand the gospel in deeper, creative, heart-level ways and discover and embrace their identity in Jesus. It was pure joy seeing them also discover the wisdom of God in how He so wonderfully made them!

But as I kayaked home, the Lord reminded me, "Nothing can thwart my purposes. When I want you to do something, no one can take it from you. The only reason they have is because I have something else for you to do!"

I so appreciated how the Lord provided a way out from being frustrated, even bitter, over how this was handled, as He first prepared my heart to hear this news after I'd enjoyed sweet time with Him, and He also gave me a new beautiful perspective!

He is so faithful to keep His promises! And 1 Corinthians 10:13 is one I experience Him being faithful to do almost daily! I am so thankful!

## CREATIVE REVIEW

When we get to heaven, I bet we'll be amazed to learn all the ways the Lord employed to not let us be tempted beyond our ability. Can you imagine how vulnerable we'd be if He didn't? I bet I wouldn't last a minute! I like to picture him as a shield surrounding me whenever something is too much for me. I've also experienced him closing doors and setting up barriers.

Want a fun idea to do as you review this week? Create a border illustrating what it might look like when the Lord is shielding you, protecting you from being tempted by something that would be beyond your ability to endure (and if you'd like to double dip creatively, draw something in the space below that represents Him providing a way out when you're tempted.)

NO TEMPTATION HAS OVERTAKEN YOU  
THAT IS NOT COMMON TO MAN. GOD IS FAITHFUL,  
AND HE WILL NOT LET YOU BE TEMPTED BEYOND  
YOUR ABILITY, BUT

1 CORINTHIANS 10:13  
With

THE TEMPTATION (HE WILL ALSO PROVIDE  
THE WAY OF ESCAPE,  
THAT YOU MAY BE ABLE TO  
ENDURE IT.

# TIME IN GOD'S WORD

*Week 4: A Heart For Battle ~ Consider the Context*

1 CORINTHIANS 10: 1-14

Remember our history, friends, and be warned. All our ancestors were led by the providential Cloud and taken miraculously through the Sea. They went through the waters, in a baptism like ours, as Moses led them from enslaving death to salvation life. They all ate and drank identical food and drink, meals provided daily by God. They drank from the Rock, God's fountain for them that stayed with them wherever they were. And the Rock was Christ. But just experiencing God's wonder and grace didn't seem to mean much—most of them were defeated by temptation during the hard times in the desert, and God was not pleased.

The same thing could happen to us. We must be on guard so that we never get caught up in wanting our own way as they did. And we must not turn our religion into a circus as they did—“First the people partied, then they threw a dance.” We must not be sexually promiscuous— they paid for that, remember, with 23,000 deaths in one day! We must never try to get Christ to serve us instead of us serving him; they tried it, and God launched an epidemic of poisonous snakes. We must be careful not to stir up discontent; discontent destroyed them.

These are all warning markers—danger!— in our history books, written down so that we don't repeat their mistakes. Our positions in the story are parallel—they at the beginning, we at the end—and we are just as capable of messing it up as they were. Don't be so naive and self- confident. You're not exempt. You could fall flat on your face as easily as anyone else. Forget about self- confidence; it's useless. Cultivate God-confidence.

No test or temptation that comes your way is beyond the course of what others have had to face. All you need to remember is that God will never let you down; he'll never let you be pushed past your limit; he'll always be there to help you come through it.

So, my very dear friends, when you see people reducing God to something they can use or control, get out of their company as fast as you can.

1 Corinthians 10: 1-14 (MSG)

LOOK: Select one verse (or portion of a verse) to focus on and record it here:

**LISTEN:** Why did you select this verse? Journal your thoughts as you ponder this verse with the Lord.

**LIVE IT OUT:** How does this verse connect with your life? How do you sense the Lord inviting you to respond to what He's laid on your heart regarding this verse?

**LET IT LAST:** Draw a quick picture to illustrate the main thing that stood out to you.



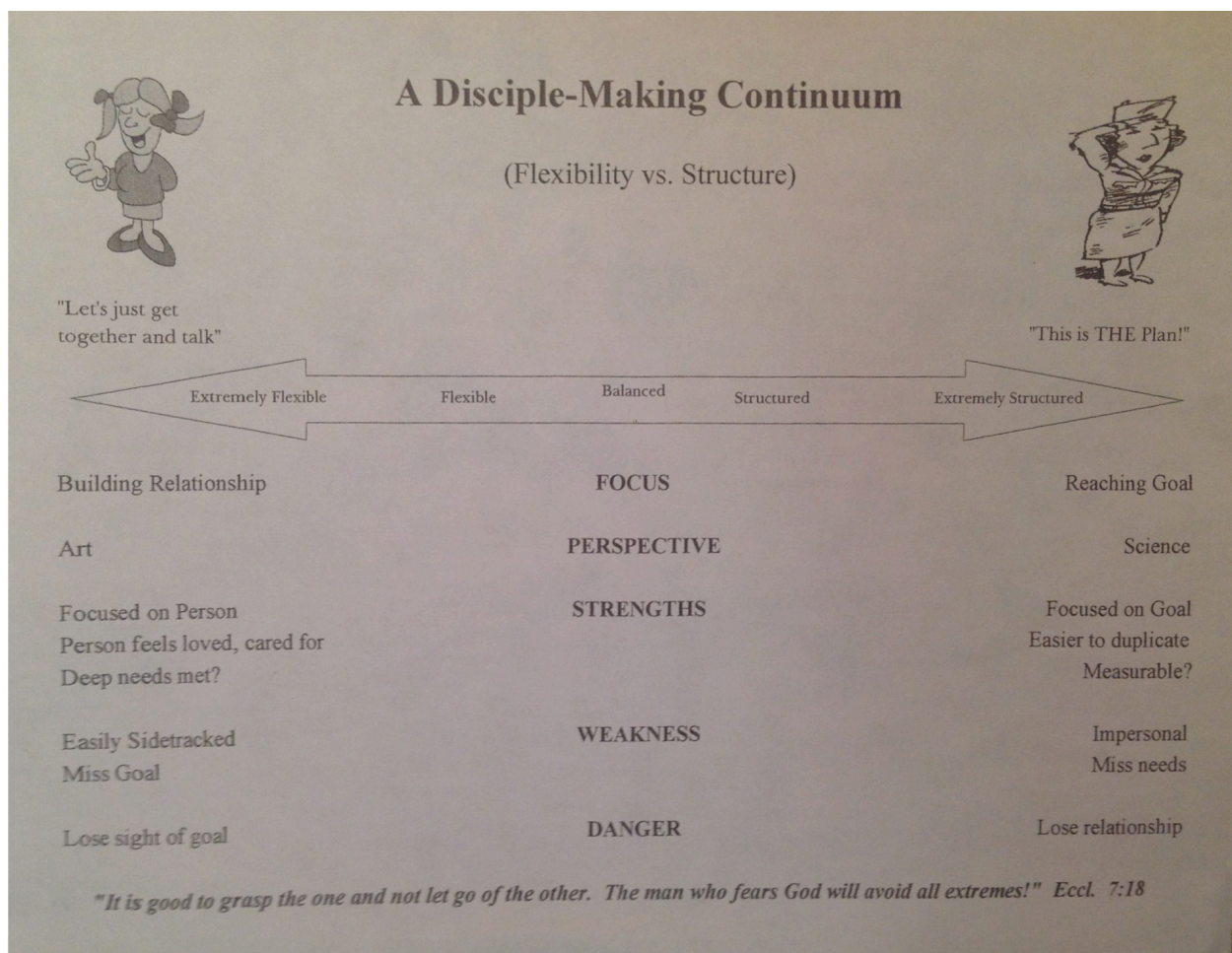
# A DISCIPLE-MAKING CONTINUUM

## FLEXIBILITY VS. STRUCTURE

There is not one way to disciple. This is true not only because each person being disciplined is unique, but also because every discipler is unique!

Personality, maturity, past experiences, convictions, spiritual gifting... there are so many factors that impact the way we do what we do.

Some disciplers are super structured. They know what they want to accomplish and have a clear plan for how to get there. Others are extremely flexible, highly relational, ready and willing to go with the flow. In between there's a range of possibilities!



This reality can be expressed by a continuum which features on the left “extreme flexibility,” (aka “*Let’s just get together and talk...*”) and on the right “extreme structure” (aka “*This is THE plan!*”).

There are strengths and weaknesses to both.

Consider the following: At one extreme we have Flexible Felicity. Her focus is primarily on building relationship. She tends to see disciple-making as an art, with each encounter a new creative opportunity. Her strengths can be her focus on the person, who usually feels very loved and cared for, and her flexibility may result in deep needs being met that might otherwise be missed which she intuitively may be more likely to pick up on (though this doesn’t always happen!). A key weakness is she can easily be sidetracked and miss the goal. Her greatest danger is to lose sight of the goal and end up spinning her wheels, perhaps even wasting the time. When this happens does the enemy ever rejoice!

At the other extreme we find Structured Susan. Her focus is on reaching the goal. She views disciple-making as a science (most likely one she’s got down pat! and is very eager to help others learn to “do right”). Her strengths are her ability to clearly articulate her goals at all times for this is primarily what she’s focusing on. What she does in her one on ones tends to be easier to duplicate, since the more organized something is the more easily it lends itself to passing on, and what she does with people is usually measurable (ie, she knows when her plans are accomplished...at least her part of doing it!). A key weakness is this can be impersonal and with such a heavy focus on a predetermined plan, important needs can easily be missed and people can end up feeling like a project. The key danger here is losing the relationship! When this happens does the enemy ever score a huge victory.

In Ecclesiastes 7:18 we’re told, “It is good to grasp the one and not let go of the other. The man who fears God will avoid all extremes.” Have I ever found this to be wise advice. There can be great beauty and strength in balance! For example, it’s vital to love well (see 1 Cor 13:1-3!), people really do grow best in the context of relationship, and to realize you are meeting with a unique individual who has unique needs, but also to understand being intentional can be a huge part of loving well. How do you feel when someone puts effort into preparing something for you?!

My favorite part is what happens to our focus as we struggle to stay more balanced – rather than focusing primarily on the person or on the goal, I find the struggle tends to help me keep my focus primarily on God!

Can it ever help to pray through this continuum and consider where you fall on it:

Where does your personality naturally place you?

How have your past experiences influenced this, especially if you were discipled, what did that look like?

What impact has your spiritual maturity had on this? Have you changed through the years?

Are there any convictions influencing what you do?

And how does your gifting influence this?

For example, I'm a fairly flexible, intuitive, highly creative and highly distractible person who LOVES people!!! So on the basis of personality alone, it's obvious I'm more likely to fall on the left of the continuum. BUT I was disciplined by a woman who was structured and had a plan so that provides balance! Since what was modeled for me was more on the right side, I've experienced the benefits of that side too.

Because I've been discipling women for over thirty years I have a lot of tools available to use that are internalized, so if an opportunity to meet one on one with someone pops up unexpectedly I don't need as much advance planning as I did when I was first learning how to do this. Though without a doubt the first tool I always seek to use is prayer, because I realize no matter how much experience I have, God's ways still aren't my ways and I so want to walk in step with Him! (that's a conviction that's resulted in a set plan to pray first!)

Over the years I've seen one of the best ways I can help women is to faithfully spend time in the Word with them each time we meet. With all my heart (yes, this is a deep conviction!) I believe that's the most enriching thing I can ever do with anyone. So I intentionally plan each week to spend focused time together in the Word.

And I have a deep conviction about spiritual generations of laborers being raised up – I want what I'm passing on that's of value to be readily passed onto others. I so want each woman I'm meeting with to discover the joy of doing with others what I'm doing with her! Not only for the benefit of others – I deeply believe this is key for her finishing life well. Does that ever spur me on to be more organized so what I do is pass-on-able!

Now hospitality is one of my gifts, so I am much more likely to seek to disciple in a warm place preferably with a cup of tea and something good to eat and to spend time at the start catching up and relationally connecting! But the Lord has also given me a gift of teaching and often teaching well requires advance planning (like making certain I have two sets of colored pencils or copies of tools I'm introducing! ;0) and being aware of the time (which does NOT come naturally to me) so we have enough time to do what I believe the Lord wants us doing!

So I continue to seek to grow towards being more balanced when I'm discipling women. In all honesty, this can be a struggle! I expect I'm always going to be more on the left side due to my personality. But that's not bad! That's a big part of how the Lord made me. Maybe structure and planning come more naturally for you and you need to be more intentional about enjoying relationship with those you meet with. Either way, let's not let what comes naturally be an excuse that keeps us from growing, or from doing the best we can for the women we're discipling!

# HEART TO HEART



## *A Heart for Forgiveness*

FOCUS: 1 JOHN 1:9

### HEAR

1. How did you struggle with temptation this past week?
  1. Be ready to share vulnerably from your life on this first.
  2. Remember even in stories of failure where you gave into temptation there is opportunity to grow in trusting God as you identify how he faithfully provided a way out even if you didn't take it.
1. Review verses together:
  1. As you review your verses this week ask, "What part of this verse impacted you the most this week?"
  2. Next review previous verses and ask, "How has having these memorized been impacting your life?" Take initiative to share your answer to this question too.
    1. John 1:12-13
    2. John 16:24
    3. 1 Corinthians 10:13

## **E**XPLORE

1. When you think about forgiveness what comes to mind?
2. Why did you select that picture? (each of you share)

## **MEMORIZE**

1. Create a Verse Card
  1. Write on a 3x5 card the Title: God's Promise of Forgiveness
  2. Then write the Reference: 1 John 1:9
  3. Write the verse phrase by phrase
  4. The write the Reference again at the bottom of the card: 1 John 1:9
2. Memorize the Verse, phrase by phrase

## **BIBLE STUDY**

1. Chapter 4 Tackle N' Trust
  1. What has God promised?
  2. What is our part?

## **CREATIVELY PROCESS:** The Great Exchange

(you can see a video of this here:

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/1us0w19FMTiILWEb1WO\\_Sot-3C8TqidpV/view?usp=sharing](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1us0w19FMTiILWEb1WO_Sot-3C8TqidpV/view?usp=sharing))

### Materials:

Four blank pieces of paper (I prefer for two of them to be cardstock if possible - easier to glue onto when the paper has some substance, but this is not necessary)

Two glue sticks (or you can share if you only have one)

Two pens

Red Marker

### Directions:

1. Fold the paper in half vertically.in the middle
2. Fold the paper horizontally about an inch down from the top -
3. Draw lines on the creases to create two columns
4. Write your name at the top of one column, and Jesus' name at the top of the second column
5. Underneath your name write down the sin you've committed this past week. You can pray and invite God to search your hearts to bring this to mind.
6. Then underneath Jesus' name write Perfect obedience for 33 years
7. Separate the paper along each of the folds, both horizontal and vertical
8. On the piece of cardstock glue your name and Jesus' name at the top of the page.
9. Underneath Jesus' name glue the column of your sins.
10. Then take the red marker and write on top of it PAID IN FULL!
11. Underneath your name glue the column that says Perfect obedience for 33 years. Then write, "Because of Jesus"
12. This is what justification means, "Just as if I never sinned. Just as if I did everything right, this is how God sees me even on my worse day."

### Discuss:

1. How did it feel to do this?

2. Christ died for sins once for all, but when we confess, agreeing with him what we've done is wrong we have opportunity to experience the great exchange and appreciate even more what Jesus has done for us.

## **A**PPLY

1. Encourage her to confess her sins every day this week, taking Jesus up on his offer in 1 John 1:9
2. Review 1 John 1:9 ten times every day this week.
  1. Create a grid on the back of the scripture memory card and encourage her to record a check each time she reviews
3. Keep reviewing John 1:12-13, John 16:24 and 1 Corinthians 10:13 once a day this week

## **R**EMEMBER

DISCUSS: What highlights stood out to you from our time together today?

## **T**ELL A FRIEND

1. PRAY: Share with Jesus what you're thankful for from this time
2. PASS IT ON: Who might you be able to share this with? What could it look like for you to do this?

## EXTRA:

Read the story of The Princess and the Pig

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1i9JVzpKQrqE4XQCWEoUPw1bJeRDBBOph-P9IC4eLHbA/edit?usp=sharing>

What do you learn about forgiveness from this story?

EXTRA: Watch this video of a True Discipleship Story, then discuss

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xEkzACRO144Fm0-EwZZTllihLG1XSEvn/view?usp=sharing>



# TACKLE N' TRUST

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CHAPTER 4

God's Promise of Forgiveness

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

Ever beat yourself up when you blow it? That is not at all what the Lord wants you to do! But does the enemy ever love it!

You see, as long as I'm beating myself up, I'm focusing on myself, not what Jesus has done for me. And because I live in a broken, fallen world and have a sinful nature that's still very much alive and kicking, I *am* going to blow it. As the apostle Paul says, "For I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate. . . . For I have the desire to do what is right, but not the ability to carry it out (Romans 7:15,18).

What a difference it made the night I entered into a relationship with Him. I truly experienced Him cleansing me from head to toe. But it wasn't long until I sinned again. Good thing that when Jesus died on the cross, He died for *all* of my sin - even those I haven't committed yet. I still need Him every single day to save me from my sin.

When I sin, it's so easy to just feel bad and move on. But when I take time to take Him up on this promise, is there ever peace and joy as I experience Him cleansing me all over again!

Jesus says, "He who is forgiven little loves little" (Luke 7:47). The reality is we all have been forgiven much. But when we take the time to confess, we are much more likely to realize this--and grow in loving Jesus even more!



TACKLE!

1. Memorize this verse!

Pray! Ask the Lord to help you memorize this for life.

Remember, a spiritual battle is raging, and the enemy does not want you to know or remember this promise! He wants to get you beating yourself up, focusing on you rather than Jesus because he does not want you to grow in loving Jesus more - or experiencing the joy that could be yours! So don't be surprised if it's hard to memorize this one.

It's not a long verse, so you may be tempted to shortcut taking time to memorize it well. Don't! Dive in one phrase at a time, and don't move on to the next until you get it word perfect.

Remember to create a grid on the back of your card to check off each time you review. By this time, you should be reviewing your current verse ten to fifteen times a day and each of the preceding verses once a day! This is crucial to store the verses in your long-term memory. Here's what my checklist looks like.

day	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	1 John 1:9	John 1:12-13	John 16:24	1 Corinthians 10:13
M																	
T																	
W																	
Th																	
F																	
Sa																	
Su																	

This may seem like a ton of work, but here's the neat thing: it only takes six weeks for something to become a lifelong habit. If you devise a way of reviewing regularly, you will reap the rewards of having God's Word hidden in your heart for the rest of your life! Don't just take my word for it! Check out Psalm 119:9,11

Small wonder the enemy is NOT happy about this, eh?

How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to you word. . . . I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

2. Seek to understand the verse:

“If we confess our sins”

What does that “if” signify?

What does it mean to confess?
(Read the definition at the right and then write this in your own words below)

The Greek word used here for *confess* is ὁμολογῶμεν and it means:

“1) to say the same thing as another, i.e. to agree with, assent 2) to concede 2a) not to refuse, to promise 2b) not to deny 2b1) to confess 2b2) declare 2b3) to confess, i.e. to admit or declare one's self guilty of what one is accused of 3) to profess 3a) to declare openly, speak out freely 3b) to profess one's self the worshipper of one 4) to praise, celebrate”

-SOURCE: [Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon](#)

According to Psalm 32, to whom should we confess our sins to?

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah **I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah Psalm 32:1-5**

Who else should we confess our sins to?

According to James 5:16, what difference can it make if we do this?

Consider James 5:16...

“Confess your sins to one another and pray for each other that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

“He is faithful and just”

In His act of forgiving how is God described? (Psalm 86:5 is another beautiful verse on this!)

Why does this matter? What difference can knowing this make in your life?

“to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

According to Ephesians 1:7, how are we forgiven?

According to Hebrews 10:12-14, when was the penalty for your sins paid?

How do you usually feel after you sin?

Look at Hebrews 10:17 and Romans 8:1--do you need to continue to feel guilty about your sin?

Why do you think God gives us this promise, telling us to confess our sins?

What happens if you die and you've entered into a personal relationship with Jesus but haven't confessed a sin?

What do you learn from 1 Peter 3:18?

Christ died for sins, once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. . **1 Peter 3:18**

So why confess?

According to Proverbs 28:13, what should accompany confession?

Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.

Proverbs 28:13

TRUST!

Is there ever a ton that can be applied from this promise!!!

God has given us everything we need for life and godliness! Can you see how this promise plays a vital role in this? Even when you blow it, God has you covered! And not just in the heavenly realms, but He's provided a way so you don't have to keep struggling with guilt and condemnation! You also have the opportunity to love Him more as you act on this promise.

What difference can knowing this make in your life? Take some time to jot down your thoughts regarding this!



I have found it helpful to
end each day by praying
through the acronym
ACTS:

Adoration - I consider how
I experienced the Lord
throughout the day and
praise Him.

Confession - I agree with
Jesus about times I "blew
it" and ask for His help to
repent (which simply
means to change direction
so I don't keep blowing it).

Thanksgiving - When I've
confessed, I can focus on
Jesus and thank Him for
how He willingly suffered
to pay the penalty for my
sin. And of course there
are always a ton of other
things from my day to
thank Him for!

Supplication - what a
difference it can make to
share with Jesus the
concerns on my heart. I
find I sleep so much better
when I cast my anxieties
on Him! (1 Peter 5:7)

What do you sense the Lord wants you to do
in response to what you've learned from Him
while working through this chapter?

PROMISE BASED LIVING

(A true story)

“When I went to college, I followed a guy I dated all through high school to the University of Florida. After my first semester, we got engaged. We had been in a physical relationship, and I would have said at the time that I was a Christian, but I wasn’t walking with the Lord. I didn’t know what it was to have the Lord be the Lord in my life.

In my freshman year, my roommate’s brother was dating a girl, and her name was Debbie Entsminger. She asked us to run and get yogurt and hang out. So when she asked us to Bible study, I wanted to go. I wanted to learn and grow. And I did. Then, she also asked me if I wanted to memorize scripture.

At that time, as I was reading the Word, the Lord started working on my heart. I saw that I wasn’t walking with the Lord and was not in his will. Then we memorized 1 John 1:9, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

The guy I was dating was not a Christian. And God was moving me in a different direction. He wanted me to make Him the Lord of my life. And so I hung on to that promise that I could start over, and I could be pure and righteous in the Lord’s eyes, and I was forgiven. So I made that decision. I asked the Lord to forgive me. I turned away from the sin. I broke off the relationship.

Debbie challenged me not to date for a year and instead pursue God. I did, and I was growing. And I hung on to that promise. Because there were others around saying, ‘We you know you. This is who you are. This is what you’ve done.’ And I’d respond, ‘No, I get to start over. The Lord said so.’

Down the road, I met a Christian guy I was so excited about. There came a day when I had to tell him about my past, which was really hard. I didn’t know how he would handle it.

To my dismay, he did have a hard time. He walked away for a little while. He had to process all that. Then the lies started coming in, ‘I’m dirty.’ ‘I am not good enough for him.’ ‘I’m bad, and he deserves somebody better than me.’

Then I remembered that verse, ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness,’ and I thought, *Wait a second. He has the problem, not me. He doesn’t understand forgiveness. He doesn’t understand what the Lord did in my life.* And that gave me so much peace! That verse reminded me of the truth, so I didn’t get down on myself with all the lies that Satan was trying to feed me at that moment.

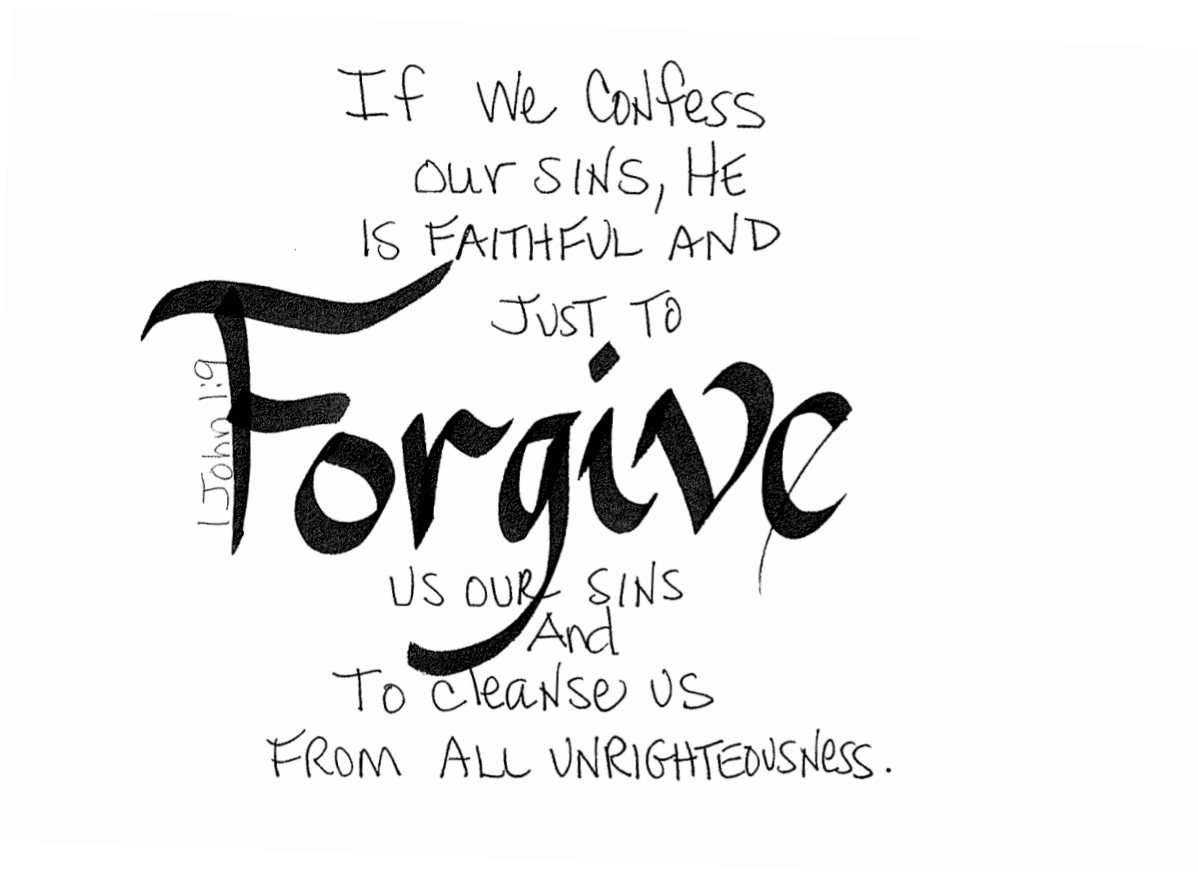
So I told that guy, ‘You have the issue if you don’t see that I am forgiven and purified.’ Then he did see it. He did understand it, and we have been married for thirty-three years!

It is so important to know scripture, to have it memorized so when you need it, you have it! Then the Holy Spirit can pull it up in the middle of the night when you wake up, and you’re just filled with lies, or in the middle of a workday, or you’re driving your car... Whenever lies pop in, you need to be able to call on Scripture to fight off Satan.

So as you’re discipling others and wanting to grow, even for the sake of your own children one day, memorize scripture, have it in your mind, have it in your heart, know these promises from the Lord, so you can fight off those lies and know the truth.”

CREATIVE REVIEW

The Oxford Dictionary defines abstract art as “art that does not attempt to represent external reality, but seeks to achieve its effect using shapes, forms, colors, and textures.” What color (or colors) come to mind when you think about this verse? This week, using crayons or colored pencils color, why not try abstract art as you seek to reflect this? Feel free to color the page one color or to mix colors, as there may be more than one color that comes to mind. Have fun creating with Jesus as you ponder this promise.



TIME IN GOD'S WORD

Week 5: A Heart Forgiven ~ Consider the Context

FOCUS: MATTHEW 6:5-15, 1 JOHN 1:5-15 (MSG)

This, in essence, is the message we heard from Christ and are passing on to you: God is light, pure light; there's not a trace of darkness in him.

If we claim that we experience a shared life with him and continue to stumble around in the dark, we're obviously lying through our teeth—we're not living what we claim. But if we walk in the light, God himself being the light, we also experience a shared life with one another, as the sacrificed blood of Jesus, God's Son, purges all our sin.

If we claim that we're free of sin, we're only fooling ourselves. A claim like that is errant nonsense. On the other hand, if we admit our sins—simply come clean about them—he won't let us down; he'll be true to himself. He'll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing. If we claim that we've never sinned, we out-and-out contradict God—make a liar out of him. A claim like that only shows off our ignorance of God. 1 John 1:5-15 (MSG)

“Here's what I want you to do: Find a quiet, secluded place so you won't be tempted to role-play before God. Just be there as simply and honestly as you can manage. The focus will shift from you to God, and you will begin to sense his grace.

“The world is full of so-called prayer warriors who are prayer-ignorant. They're full of formulas and programs and advice, peddling techniques for getting what you want from God. Don't fall for that nonsense. This is your Father you are dealing with, and he knows better than you what you need. With a God like this loving you, you can pray very simply. Like this:

Our Father in heaven,
Reveal who you are.
Set the world right;
Do what's best—as above, so below.
Keep us alive with three square meals.
Keep us forgiven with you and forgiving others.
Keep us safe from ourselves and the Devil.
You're in charge! You can do anything you want!
You're ablaze in beauty! Yes. Yes. Yes.

“In prayer there is a connection between what God does and what you do. You can't get forgiveness from God, for instance, without also forgiving others. If you refuse to do your part, you cut yourself off from God's part.

Matthew 6:5-15 (MSG)

LOOK: Select one verse (or portion of a verse) to focus on and record it here:

LISTEN: Why did you select this verse? Journal your thoughts as you ponder this verse with the Lord.

LIVE IT OUT: How does this verse connect with your life? How do you sense the Lord inviting you to respond to what He's laid on your heart regarding this verse?

LET IT LAST: Draw a quick picture to illustrate the main thing that stood out to you.

PRINCESS & THE PIG

by Debbie Entsminger

Once upon a time there was a pig. And that pig lived in a putrid pigpen. But on hot days that pig loved to roll in the mud, sloshing about with her friends and singing,

“Mud, mud it feels so good

I roll in it just like I should

because a pig is what I am.

And one day I’ll be...”

“A delicious ham!”

That last part came from the evil farmer who leered at the pigs as he dumped scraps into the filthy trough. It never looked very appetizing, but that’s all the pigs had ever known so they slurped it up hungrily, thankful for how it filled their bellies.

Now twice a day the Crown Prince rode by on his way to and from town, singing softly as he did,

“This is not who you are.

Just call out to me.

Ask me to save you

And I'll set you free."

Oh, the fun those pigs had then, chanting what the farmer taught them,

"Why would we

want to be free

when mud is as pleasurable

as life can be?!"

Giggling, they dove into the mud, drowning out his song. So life continued on filthy and fun.

Every now and then, the farmer would come and announce, "Time for one of you lucky ones to head to hog heaven!" Eagerly each pig clamored to be chosen. "Me, me, me! Oh please pick me!" The award always went to the fattest pig.

Dirtsey sighed. She'd been the runt of her litter and was still the smallest of all the pigs.

What hope did she have? She loved her mud, but she wondered... what was she missing out on?

"There is more."

Dirtsey looked up to find the Crown Prince at the side of the pigpen, "Excuse me?"

“There really is more. But it’s not where you’re looking for it.”

Dirtsey scowled, “What would you know about hog heaven?”

The Crown Prince sighed, “I’ve been there.”

“You have?!” Dirtsey’s eyes widened, “Oh, please tell me all about it!”

“What does the farmer sing at the end of your mud song?”

“You mean about us one day being delicious hams?”

“Yes. Do you know what that means?”

Dirtsey nodded, “We asked the farmer one day and he said ham is another word for comedian. No wonder we all love to laugh!”

“That is one definition but that’s not what happens in hog heaven.” The Crown Prince drew his finger across his throat, “That way only leads to death.”

“No way!” Dirtsey’s eyes filled with tears. Her best friend had been selected that morning!

The Crown Prince nodded.

Well, that little pig dove right into the mud. She didn’t want to hear one more word! The farmer was right. She never should’ve listened to the Crown Prince. It couldn’t be true!

But the next time the farmer came she wasn’t as quick to volunteer. Instead she watched carefully, noting how roughly he treated the one selected. And she began to wonder...

Suddenly the mud wasn't as fun and the slop didn't taste as good. The next time the Crown Prince walked by singing, she found herself listening to his words.

“This is not who you are.

Just call out to me.

Ask me to save you

And I'll set you free.”

Free? For the first time she noticed the fence around the pigpen. She'd always thought it was to keep the mud in. But now she began to wonder... was she a prisoner?

She tried squeezing through, but while she was little she wasn't that little! Then she tried to jump over it only to discover pigs can dive but they don't jump very high. She even tried to dig her way out but found the fence went deeper than it appeared. The more she tried to escape the more confined she felt. But what could she do?

“This is not who you are.

Just call out to me...”

The Crown Prince! What was he singing?

“Ask me to save you

And I’ll set you free.”

She couldn’t save herself, would he really save her? It sounded too good to be true!

What would he want with a pig? Especially such a dirty pig! He was always spotless.

She tried to rub the mud off but how clean can you get sitting in the middle of a pigpen?!

She sighed. He must be singing for someone else.

Then one day a beautiful princess walked over to the pigpen and called her by name. “Dirtsey? The Crown Prince asked me to come tell you my story. I use to be right where you are, but when I called out to the prince he saved me, he changed me and set me free!”

Dirtsey pulled back, “Say what?!”

The Princess smiled, “Mud, mud it feels so good... I use to sing that too!”

“But you don’t look anything like a pig?!”

The princess laughed. “I know. It’s so amazing. But that’s part of him saving. Once you call out to him, you don’t stay the same. You are forever changed into who you really were created to be a daughter of the King.”

Dirtsey took a long look at the Princess. She was beautiful! She was clean! But she was so different! It was hard to imagine her as a pig.

Just then the farmer came to bring the day's slop. When he saw the Princess he commanded, "Manuerina! Get back in here where you belong!"

The Princess laughed. "I don't belong here. You know the Prince has paid to set me free. And I am free indeed. My name is no longer Manuerina, but Chosenia for I was chosen by the King of Kings to be his beloved daughter."

The evil farmer growled and kicked Dirtsey to the center of the pen, "Stop listening to lies!"

Dirtsey's head was spinning. The farmer knew the princess? She'd been in here? Could it really be she was once a pig and now beautiful and free and a daughter of the King?!

As the Princess took her leave she sang,

"Remember Crown Prince's song, It really is true.

I once was a pig trapped just like you."

"Lies! Lies! Lies!" The farmer yelled. "And you " he glared at Dirtsey, "I'm coming for you next! Get ready to say hello to hog heaven!" Off he walked cackling.

Hog heaven? Or Hog hell?! Whatever it was she did not want to go there. Once again she tried squeezing, jumping, digging but... never had she felt so trapped. Big tears rolled down her face mixing with the mud on her snout and getting her even muddier. Oh what would she do?

“This is not who you are

Just call out to me

Ask me to save you

And I’ll set you free.”

The Crown Prince! He was riding by! Could he? Would he save her? She ran to the edge of the pen.

“Oh Crown Prince! If it’s really true will you please save me?!”

Immediately she felt a tingling sensation from the tip of her snout, flowing all the way through her body and down through her hooves. When she opened her eyes she gasped her hooves were gone and in their place were arms and legs, hands and feet!

And there was the Crown Prince smiling, “Grab my hand and let me pull you out of that pit.”

As he did, all the mud fell off her. For the first time in her life she was clean! The prince put a royal robe on her and gave her a big hug and off she went with him to his castle.

Now the princess was no longer a pig. She had royal clothes to wear and a special room that was hers in the castle. She had royal food to eat and princess lessons to attend each day for she had a lot to learn about being a princess.

Truly she looked nothing at all like a pig. But you have to remember for all of her life, a pig's life was all she'd ever known.

That first night at dinner when the royal stew was placed before her she lowered her face into it. That was the only way she'd ever known to eat.

And when a royal drink was placed before her she lapped it up with her tongue. And if she got an itch in her back she fell to the ground and rolled around.

Yes, she had a lot to learn. And sometimes she really got her feelings hurt. Especially by the princesses who forgot they once were pigs too.

But Chosenia was frequently by her side helping her learn not only how to act like a princess but also how to enjoy her relationships in the Royal family especially with her dad the King.

What a privilege it was for Chosenia to bring her into His presence that first time. Especially as He declared, "Your name is no longer Dirtsey but Delightina. For I take great delight in you my daughter!"

Delightina couldn't believe her ears! The King found delight in her?! Who slopped her stew and lapped her drink and scratched her back on the floor?! How could it be?

Suddenly the Prince choir began to sing:

“Daughter of the King
His beauty's seen in you
Because of whose you are
Not because of what you do.”

Never had she felt so loved, so clean, so beautiful. And if that wasn't enough, her Father said, “Delightina, I have special work I've prepared in advance for you to do. Would you like to work with me helping to advance my kingdom?”

Like it? She'd love it!

So every day she headed to the village doing whatever the King asked her to do. On her way to and from the village she always passed her old pigpen. And she'd stop and plead with her friends to call out to the Crown Prince. But they just giggled and dove into the mud.

One day when she passed by, the farmer was in the pen delivering slop.
“Dirtsey! Get back in here! Right this minute!”

Delightina trembled in her shoes but remembered how Chosenia answered him. “The Crown Prince has set me free. I’m not Dirtsey anymore, but Delightina.... Because the King of kings takes great delight in me.”

“Delight? In you? A pig?!” The farmer mocked, “You may pull the wool over other’s eyes, but you can’t fool me. I was there when you were born. You may look all cleaned up on the outside but deep inside you are still a pig and you’ll always be a pig.

You know it too.”

Delightina dropped her basket and raced away. The Farmer cackled, “She’ll be back.”

From then on, no matter what time she headed to town it seemed the Farmer was always in the pigpen just waiting to rasp out,

“You’ll always be a pig and you know it too.

Dirty Dirtsey is still the real you.”

She tried to stop her ears, but the tune got stuck in her brain. In her efforts to drown it out she began to work harder in the town. “I’ll show him!” She declared.

But as she worked harder, she spent less time in the castle and less time with the King.

One day as she stumbled toward town, exhausted from all her labors, she was relieved to find the farmer missing. “At least I don’t have to deal with him today.” All she saw were her old friends playing in the mud and giggling and squealing,

“Mud, mud it feels so good
I roll in it just like I should...”

And she remembered all the fun she used to have with them.

Suddenly the day seemed so hot and her Princess clothes uncomfortable. What would it hurt if she just dipped her finger in the mud? Surely the King wouldn’t mind her doing something to cool off a bit, I mean, she’d been working so hard.

But as she reached forward, she lost her balance and tumbled through the gate, plunging into the mud!

From head to toe she was covered. But how? She didn’t know the gate opened freely from the outside.

And then she heard it... a cackle from behind the haystack.

“I knew you’d be back. Look at you... covered in mud. No prince will want you now.” And he began to rasp,

“You’ll always be a pig and you know it too.

Dirty Dirtsey is still the real you!”

She looked at herself in despair. What a mess. Her royal gown was covered in mud.

“This is not who you are

Just call out to me

Ask me to save you

And I’ll set you free”

The Crown Prince?! Oh no! Not the Crown Prince! She ran to hide behind the trough. She couldn’t bear to think of him seeing her in here. He’d be so disappointed.

“This is not who you are

Just call out to me

Ask me to save you

And I’ll set you free.”

Was she ever relieved when he passed by. Vigorously she tried to scrape off the mud. But no matter how hard she scrubbed she couldn’t get herself clean.

“Welcome home little Piggy,” cackled the farmer. “Enjoy your slop.”

“No way!” She thought. But when hunger got the best of her, she took a bite. Though I can’t say she enjoyed it. She was miserable. Even though she knew the gate wasn’t locked, where could she go?

She couldn’t imagine returning to the palace looking like this. Besides, she didn’t want anyone to see her. All day, whenever any of the princes or princesses would walk by, she hid behind the trough, holding her breath until the coast was clear. And each time she did she got dirtier and dirtier.

“I need help!” She cried.

“This is not who you are

Just call out to me

Ask me to save you

And I’ll set you free.”

The Crown Prince! He was heading home to the castle. Could he save her again? And even if he could, would he? She ran her fingers through her mud-matted hair. She sure didn’t deserve it. Sadly, she lay down in the mud and cried herself to sleep.

The next morning, she woke to the farmer singing triumphantly.

“You’ll always be a pig and you know it too.

Dirty Dirtsey is still the real you.”

As he dumped the slop into the trough it splashed out onto her. She groaned and ran to the other side of the pen, but the farmer continued to jeer her,

“You can run but you can’t hide

You’ll always be a pig on the inside.”

And as she sunk deeper into the mud crying, The Farmer cackled,

“I’m coming back to take you away.

To Hog Heaven where you’re going to pay.”

“He can’t take you there.”

Delightina looked up in surprise to find Chosenia by the fence.

“He is such a liar. You’ve become a daughter of the King. That farmer has no authority over you – no power over you at all... unless you let him.”

“What are you doing here Chosenia?”

“I came to find you. The Crown Prince sent me. He’s come by twice to get you, but you haven’t responded.”

“I couldn’t bear the thought of him seeing me like this.” She pointed to her ruined dress, “He’ll be so disappointed. I don’t deserve for him to save me. I’ve tried so hard to clean myself up, but I can’t. I am such a mess.”

Chosenia leaned down, “Did you deserve for him to save you the first time?”

“But you don’t know what it’s like to have failed so badly.”

“Don’t I?” Chosenia’s voice was soft, “I need him as much today to save me as I did that first time. Don’t forget I was once a pig too. And I still struggle to not return to my old ways. Why do you think he walks into town and back every day? It’s not just to save the pigs who don’t know him, but to be here for us when we fall too.”

“You mean...?!”

“Yes, there is hope! And here he comes!”

“This is not who you are

Just call out to me

Ask me to save you

And I’ll set you free.”

So Delightina called. And the Crown Prince came, reaching out his hand to pull her out of the mud pit. And the moment she grabbed his hand all the mud fell off, not the tiniest spot remained! Once again, this daughter of the King was clean.

“I’m so sorry Prince. I was so wrong.”

He pulled her into his arms then gently kissed the top of her head, “That pit of worldly pleasure has a strong pull. There is only one thing stronger – my Father’s love. You need to be with Him daily, experiencing His incredible love for you, finding joy in His presence or that pit will lure you right back in.

And is it ever painful and costly every single time you fall – but never forget I am here to save you! Not just once or twice but throughout your whole life!”

As Delightina walked back to the palace accompanied by the Crown Prince and Chosenia, she saw someone running towards her. Soon she gasped. It was the King. Her daddy. Running to her with open arms.

As he enveloped her, he sang,

“You are my daughter, whom I dearly love.

I delight in you.

Nothing separates you from my love

Forever this is true.”

Now I wish I could say that was the last time Delightina fell into the pigpen. But I can’t.

She soon learned when she spent rich time with her daddy the King that mud pit held no attraction for her.

But if she didn't, if she got busy doing the work in town or chose to sleep in and miss the daily meals provided if she got hungry enough, even the slop could start to look good again.

And it was always such a mess and caused her such heartache each time she fell in. That old farmer loved to taunt her and kept trying to destroy her whenever she gave him the opportunity.

But true to his word, the Crown Prince was always there to save her no matter how many times she fell in or how dirty she got. The moment she called out to him for help and grabbed his hand that mud slid right off and she was clean as clean can be.

Soon each time she passed by the mud pit, even if it was scorching hot and her old friends looked like they were having a ton of fun, she'd remind herself, "That's not who I am."

But what helped the most was being with her daddy, enjoying him and feasting on the food he provided, for it's when you're with your daddy the King experiencing His incredible love for you, you realize how completely true it is that everyone who has called out to the Crown Prince to be saved is a new creation, becoming a daughter (or son) of the King.

Daughters of the King His beauty's seen in you
Because of whose you are not because of what you do
But as you daily listen His truth resounds within
Reminding you He loves you helping you to flee from sin
Each of you He's making Beautiful in His Time
You're becoming beautiful because He calls you mine
He's your father -Listen to his call
He's your father -Remember Him first of all.

The End

~~~~~

Reflection Questions:

What do you learn about confession from this story?

What can you learn about forgiveness from this story?

# TIPS FOR DISCIPLES

## My Little Pink Book

I am a creative, spontaneous, adventure-loving person who takes great delight in being with people, loves to hear their stories, and joins in with those stories as often as I can! But when the Lord was knitting me together in my mother's womb, well, all of those organizational and scheduling neurons never got activated (or placed there in the first place!). It's like that part of my brain simply doesn't function.

My husband is the exact opposite (We are proof the Lord can hold any marriage together!) The good news is he got all those neurons I'm missing. For the past twenty-seven years he's been trying to teach me to create "homes" for things so I'm not forever losing them. And I'm happy to report I now have one... well, sort of... for my glasses. Instead of losing them all the time, we're down to about 50%. Having a home for our keys helps even more. You wouldn't believe how much time this simple organizational trick saves me. And I sure don't miss the stress and duress experienced when racing around to find them. I am learning the value of being organized.

And when it comes to discipling, I have found keeping a record of what I do with people is helpful. Not only does it keep me from the embarrassment of, "Um, I think you already shared this with me last year..." but is it ever helpful for discerning patterns where the Lord is at work in a person's life and at the end of our times together I can give the person I meet with an outline of what we did so she can refer back to this when she starts to meet with someone else to pass on what was passed on to her.

When your kids are growing up, it's easy to think, "I'll never forget this." But so often you do. If you don't take time to write things down, it really is sad all that you forget.

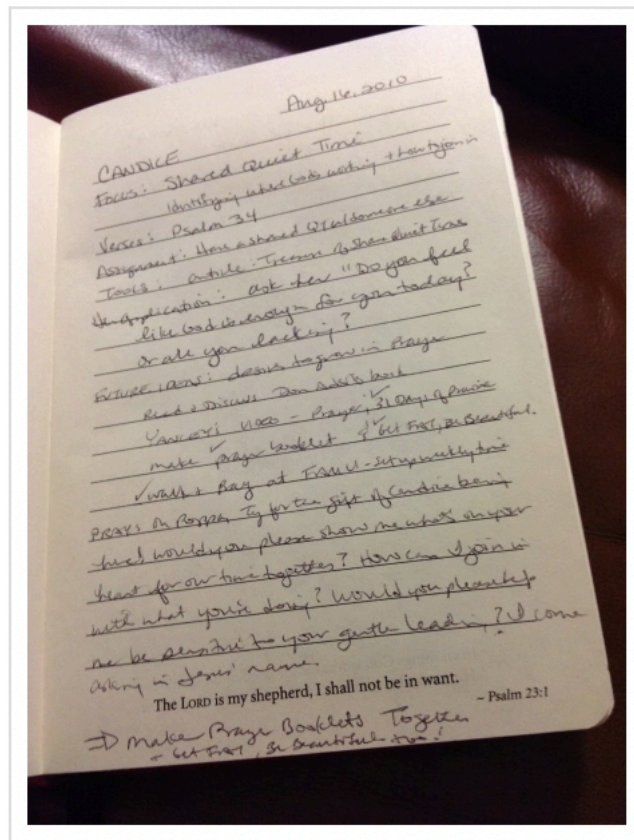
This is also true in discipleship.

When you begin discipling a woman, it's easy to think, "Of course, I'll remember what we've done." Or to assume she'll remember when she starts discipling someone else. This is especially true if the Lord has you discipling someone long term. I once disciplined a woman for seven years (it tends to take much longer in the work world and not in a collegiate setting). There were times when I really struggled to remember if we'd covered something or not.

So here I was, organizationally challenged but seeing a serious need to keep track of what I'm doing with people. You better believe I got down on my knees crying out to the Lord for wisdom. And did he ever deliver.

He gave me the idea to get a small notebook I could keep in my purse. At the end of my one-on-ones, I stop five minutes early. I ask the person I'm meeting with to write down the key things that stood out to her from our time together. While she is writing, I am writing in my notebook recording what we just did!

Now this could take a number of different forms, but here's what I've found most helpful:



After recording the person's name and the date, I write down:

**Focus:** *what the main focus of our time was*

**Verses:** *where we camped out in the scriptures*

**Assignment:** *what did I ask her to do before the next time we meet that gives her the opportunity to either process more or apply what we discussed.*

**Tools:** *what, if any, tools did I share with her during our time together*

**Future Ideas:** *I can't even begin to tell you how much it helps with future planning when I jot down ideas while they are fresh in my head.*

**Pray:** *Depending on how much time the person takes writing her summary from our time I will either write out a prayer then or later in the week spend time praying through what we did. And as I'm praying if the Lord gives me more ideas I'll write those down in the book too!*

And let me say having the person I'm meeting with write up that summary is not just busy work for her. After she is done, I have her share with me what she wrote and wow! Can it ever be insightful to hear what stood out to her! Many times it's different from what I would've expected ~ and that too can help me better prepare ~ and pray! ~ for our next time together!

I cannot recommend highly enough doing this... especially if you're organizationally challenged like me! :0)

And yes, my little book is pink! :0) Go ahead, splurge and get one that brings you joy each time you look at it! I've found I'm much less likely to lose it if I like it! ;0)



# HEART TO HEART



## *A Heart of Wisdom*

FOCUS: James 1:5

### **H**EAR

1. DISCUSS: What was it like for you to confess your sins this week? What difference did it make doing this?
2. REVIEW VERSES: As you review ask, out of all the verses you've memorized so far, which has been your favorite? Why?

John 1:12-13

John 16:24

1 Corinthians 10:13

1 John 1:9

### **E**XPLORE

1. DISCUSS: When you think about wisdom what comes to mind? (*select one*)
  1. Bring modeling clay and craft an image that illustrates this

2. Draw a quick picture or select a picture from the image gallery

## 2. MEMORIZE:

Create a Verse Card

Write on a 3x5 card the Title: God's Promise of Wisdom

Then write the Reference: James 1:5

Write the verse phrase by phrase

Write the Reference again at the bottom of the card: James 1:5

Memorize the Verse, phrase by phrase

## 3. BIBLE STUDY: Chapter 5 - Tackle N' Trust

What has God promised?

What is our part?

## APPLY

DISCUSS: What can it look like for you to take God up on this promise? (Share what it looks like for you, too!)

## CHALLENGE:

1. Review James 1:5 ten times a day this week
  1. Create a grid on the back of the scripture memory card and encourage her to record a check each time she reviews

2. Keep reviewing John 1:12-13, John 16:24, 1 Corinthians 10:13 and 1 John 1:9 once a day this week

## **R**EMEMBER:

**CREATIVELY PROCESS:** Turn to page 50 in Tackle n' Trust. Ask what Ideas she has for creatively processing the verse this week. You can select something you've already done, or she may have new ideas to share.

**DISCUSS:** What highlights stood out to you from our time together.

## **T**ELL A FRIEND

1. **PRAY:** Share with Jesus what you're thankful for from this time
2. **PASS IT ON:** Who might you be able to share this with? What could it look like for you to do this?

# TACKLE N' TRUST

## CHAPTER FIVE

God's Promise of Wisdom

James 1:5

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.

James 1:5

**H**as this promise ever brought joy into my life!

Twenty years ago, I started praying this verse at the start of my one-on-one meetings. This took my discipling to a whole different level! I don't know what's going on in someone's heart. I don't know all that's been going on in their life, let alone how God is at work in them. But God does. Does it ever make sense to take Him up on this promise!

The results blew me away! Sometimes, the words He gave me to share made me want to take notes! I knew they did not come from me. And as I experienced the Lord doing this, it led to such joy! Now, every time I meet with someone, we first pray and ask the Lord to give us wisdom.

I don't only claim this promise for discipleship but in all of life. At fifty-nine, after walking with Jesus for forty-one of those years, I am even more aware of how much I lack wisdom: about what to say yes or no to, how to handle different situations (especially conflicts) that come up, how to apply God's Word in my daily life! Over and over, as I cry out to the Lord for wisdom, I am blown away at how He doesn't just give a little but exceedingly abundantly more than I could have asked for. What a generous giver He is!



## TACKLE!

### 1. Memorize this verse!

Pray! Ask the Lord to help you memorize this verse for life because it has incredible potential to change your life!

Take it step by step, one phrase at a time - you never outgrow the need to do this!

And don't miss the topic! It will help you recall this verse when you need wisdom - when you wonder, "What was that verse on wisdom?!" it's so much more likely to pop up!

Be diligent to quote the reference twice, at the beginning and end of quoting the verse. This will be such a help later on, so when someone asks you where to find the verse, you aren't on the spot, stammering, "Well, somewhere in the Bible it says...!"

In Psalm 119, God's word is described as being as precious as silver and as costly as gold. You want to take excellent care in how you store it!

And here's what your scripture memory review grid can look like for this week:

| day | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | 1Ja<br>mes<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | Jam<br>es<br>1:5 | John<br>1:12-<br>13 | John<br>16:<br>24 | 1<br>Corint<br>hians<br>10:13 | 1 ohn<br>1:9 |
|-----|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| M   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                  |                     |                   |                               |              |
| T   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                  |                     |                   |                               |              |
| W   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                  |                     |                   |                               |              |
| Th  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                  |                     |                   |                               |              |
| F   |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                  |                     |                   |                               |              |
| Sa  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                  |                     |                   |                               |              |
| Su  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                  |                   |                  |                  |                     |                   |                               |              |

This may initially seem like a lot to review daily, but consider what Psalm 1 says: "Blessed is the one . . . whose delight is in the law of the Lord and on his law he meditates day and night! That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers."

So the true goal isn't to recite your verse word perfectly seventy to one hundred times; that's how you start. Ultimately, the goal is to always have God's Word with you so you can meditate on it day and night and live it out!

## **2. Seek to understand the verse:**

*“If any of you lacks wisdom,”*

Now, this is an interesting “if.” It's not “if you do this, then I'll. . . .” So what does this “if” reveal?

How many people do you think lack wisdom? Is that true for you? If so, when are you most aware of it?

Why do you think the promise begins this way?

*“you should ask God,”*

What is your role in experiencing this promise?

*“who gives generously to all”*

What do you learn about God from this promise?

Do you think of God as a generous giver? Why or why not?

What difference can knowing this about God make in your life?

*“without finding fault,”*

What does this mean?

What picture does this give you of God’s response when you come to Him because you lack wisdom?

*“and it will be given to you.”*

So what is God promising?

Does it say, “It will be given to him *sometimes*?”

What difference can knowing this make in your life?



## TRUST!

Can you think of situations where you lack wisdom and can take God up on His offer?

How do you think God wants you to apply this promise this week?

Sometimes I struggle to think of an application after I've spent time reading God's Word or doing Bible study. But I've realized a great application can be to ask God for the wisdom to know how and when to apply what I've just learned from Him?!

Sharing with a friend what you plan to do and asking her to pray for you, asking the Lord to bless your efforts, can make a huge difference in your life! Who could you share your application with? Write her name below and later on write what happens as a result.

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# PROMISE BASED LIVING

(A true story!)

*"I am so tired of hard things happening! I keep giving it all I've got to overcome, and things may go fine for a bit, but then bam! Another hard thing hits. And another! And another! Why keep trying? Why not just get in my car and drive off the highway?"*

I find few things in ministry as difficult and scary as sitting with a woman who has lost hope. The stakes are so high. And I often have no idea what to say. This is when I am extra thankful for Jesus' promise in James 1:5, "If any of you lacks wisdom he should ask of God who gives generously to all without finding fault and it will be done for him." This has to be my most utilized promise!

In truth, my discipling of women went to a different level when I started taking the Lord up on this promise before meeting with anyone. Over and over, I have experienced Him being faithful to provide the wisdom I need when I ask. There are times I find myself taking notes on what He gives!

So, as I sat across from this precious sister in Christ who comes from a horrendous background but who prayed with me two years ago to enter into a relationship with Jesus, you better believe I was crying out to the Lord for wisdom.

Suddenly, the thought came to mind, "Share with her about pregnancy." Okay...? I wasn't sure where this was going, but I dove in, "Lisa, without God, when hard things happen, it can feel like a bunch of horrible random events, totally out of your control. But think of pregnancy."

She looked up, surprised,

"Once labor starts, you have no control over the frequency, intensity, or duration of contractions. That first one hits, and it is off the charts painful, so you start trying to do your Lamaze breathing and endure until it ends, then you rest for a few moments, so thankful to have made it, but then the next contraction hits."

She rubbed her abdomen, "I remember."

"But these aren't random pains; each one has a purpose. The womb has to contract on the top to open on the bottom so the baby can come out. The whole purpose of Lamaze breathing is to help you relax and not fight the contraction so your body can do what it was designed to do. All that pain is a necessary part of new life coming into the world."

With God, that's true for the hard things that happen to us, too. They may feel like random, pointless problems, but God is at work in the midst of them all, producing things greater than we can ever imagine."

Lisa rubbed the back of her neck. "You think?"

"Do you know Romans 8:28?"

When Lisa shook her head, I pulled out the Message Bible. It's not the Bible I normally use, but I brought it with me because after Lisa became a Christian, I gave her a copy of this version since she'd been unfamiliar with the Bible before. I turned to Romans 8:26-28 and read, "Meanwhile, the moment we get tired in the waiting, God's Spirit is right alongside helping us along. If we don't know how or what to pray, it doesn't matter. He does our praying in and for us, making prayer out of our wordless sighs, our aching groans. He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition..."

I gasped, "I didn't know that was in there!"

"You didn't?" she asked.

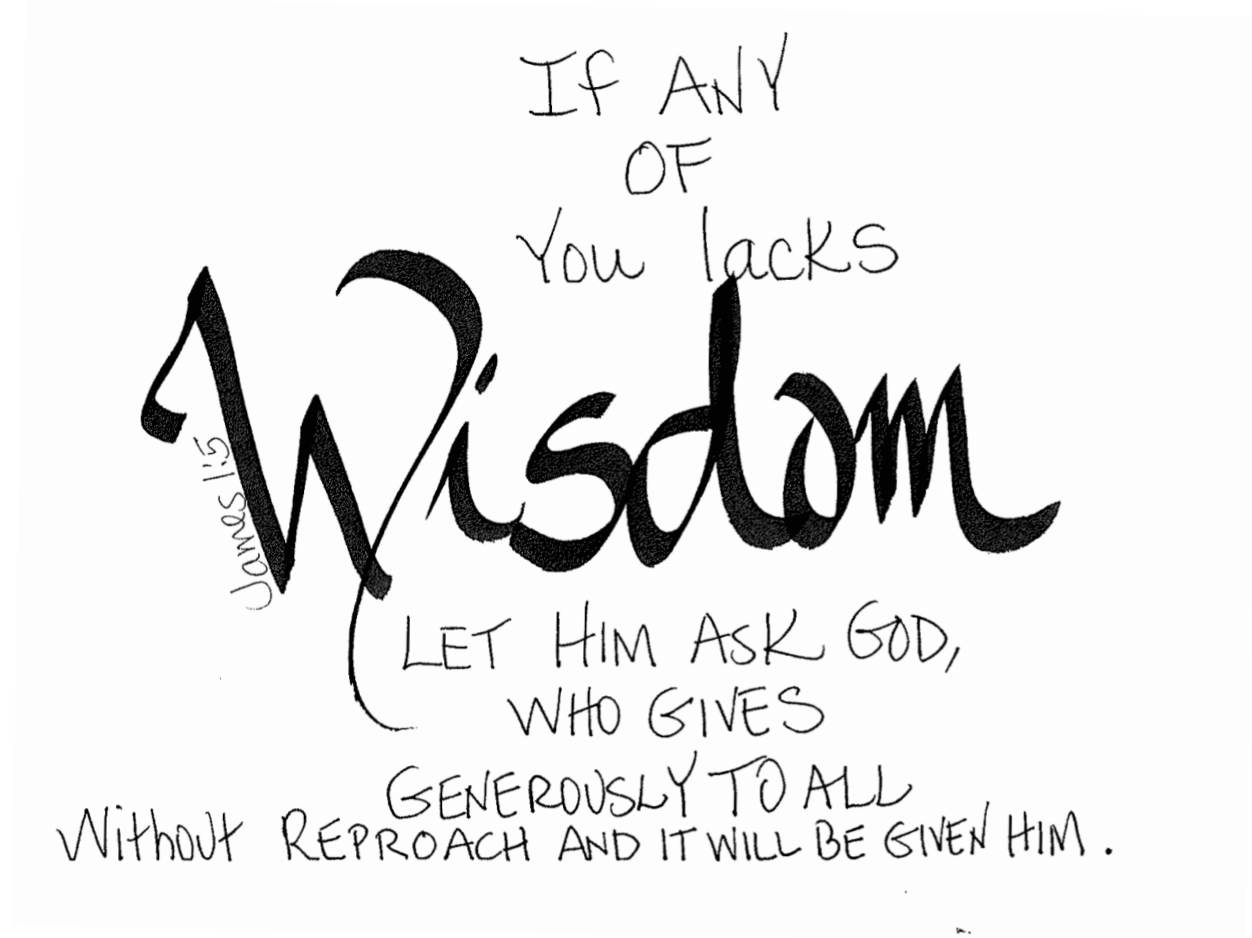
"No! Oh, friend, I asked Jesus to give wisdom to help me know what to share with you! He must really want you to hear this! Listen to how the verse continues, 'He knows us far better than we know ourselves, knows our pregnant condition, and keeps us present before God. That's why we can be so sure that every detail in our lives of love for God is worked into something good.'"

I only wish you could've seen her smile as we parted. What an amazing God we serve!

## CREATIVE REVIEW

I love this verse! Especially when I'm creatively seeking to go deeper with Jesus. I often don't know what will help His truth go from my head to my heart, so I ask the Lord to give me wisdom to know what to do. Without fail, I end up amazed as, time after time, the Lord gives ideas I never would've come up with on my own. He is such a generous God! We can ask for wisdom regarding anything!

Have fun this week by asking Him how He wants you to ponder this promise creatively. He may bring to mind one of the techniques introduced previously or something new! And remember, the goal isn't to create something museum-worthy but to enjoy a sweet time with Jesus reviewing His Word while considering it more deeply, especially how it relates to your life. Have fun!



## TIME IN GOD'S WORD

Consider the Context

A Heart of Wisdom

FOCUS: James 1:2-8

Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, <sup>3</sup> because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. If any of you lacks wisdom, you should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to you. But when you ask, you must believe and not doubt, because the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. That person should not expect to receive anything from the Lord. Such a person is double-minded and unstable in all they do. James 1:2-8 (NIV)

LOOK: Select one verse (or portion of a verse) to focus on and record it here:

LISTEN: Why did you select this verse? Journal your thoughts as you ponder this verse with the Lord.

LIVE IT OUT: How does this verse connect with your life? How do you sense the Lord inviting you to respond to what He's laid on your heart regarding this verse?

LET IT LAST: Draw a quick picture to illustrate the main thing that stood out to you.

# THE WISDOM OF QUESTIONS

If someone came up to you and asked, “What do I need to do to get eternal life?” how would you respond?

Would you dive in sharing the bridge or another illustration? Would you ask them if they’d like to start reading through the book of John with you? Or share your personal testimony?

At different times I’ve done each of these. But here’s the crazy thing... that’s not what Jesus did!

He responded with a question! (*Matthew 19:16*)

In fact, if you read through the gospels, nearly every time Jesus is asked a question, he responds with a question!

Not only can this help to clarify what the person is asking, it also engages them in dialogue, drawing them into the conversation.

This is not only helpful when doing evangelism, but especially when discipling someone. There’s a fascinating verse in 1 John 2:27, “But you have received the Holy Spirit and he lives within you, so you don’t need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know, and what he teaches is true – it is not a lie. So just as he has taught you, remain in fellowship with Christ.”

Once someone has entered into a relationship with Jesus, she has His Spirit living within her. And God’s Spirit is so faithful to do what He’s promised to do – to teach us... if we’ll listen. Over and over I am amazed at how true this verse is.

As I grasp the reality of this I realize my main job in discipling someone is not to teach her, but to come alongside and encourage her to remain in fellowship with Christ, to help her learn how to place herself in a position where she is able to hear what God wants to teach her and to help her learn to persevere in doing this.

A great way to do this is to ask questions – and teach her to ask questions.

The first question I ever ask before meeting with someone is of God, “What do you want me doing with this woman today? How can I come alongside her and join in with what you’re doing?”

Then I seek to start our time asking questions about how she’s doing. I recently met with a precious young woman who wanted to learn about forgiveness. When I asked how she was doing she started to weep and share some painful things she was wrestling with. It quickly became apparent learning about forgiveness was not the main reason the Lord brought us

together. When I asked, “What lies do you think the enemy is trying to get you to believe right now?” what followed was one of the most amazing one on ones I’ve had. And I mostly listened! Then together we considered the truth God gives in His Word to combat those lies. And yes, we ended up in the last ten minutes talking about forgiveness as it tied in with what she was struggling with but do you see? Without asking questions I so easily could’ve missed out on what the Lord really wanted for our time!

When I’m having a shared quiet time with someone I’m helping her learn to ask, “Where do you want me to focus today in your Word, Lord?” “What do you want to say to me through this?” and “What difference do you want this to make in my life?”

You don’t have a daily quiet time to “be a good Christian” or to earn God’s favor. You have one because this is an incredible way to learn to listen to the Lord and remain in fellowship with Him, so when He wants to teach you something you’re picking up on it and developing the discipline of responding and doing what He teaches you! I cannot stress how radically life changing this is!!!

Now while I initially may “teach” them what I do, note the focus is on them showing up to learn from the Lord. This helps them grow in their dependence on Him and not on me!

I need to be careful because it can be a heady thing having someone ask for your advice or ask you how to do something. My pride loves to demonstrate what I know. It’s so easy for that to kick in without me even realizing it and suddenly a one on one becomes a monologue.

But you know, when I take time to ask questions that really helps save me (and the woman I’m meeting with!) from this!

Plus it’s amazing how many times when I respond with a question I discover what she really is asking is rather different from what I first thought!

Good question asking is a skill. It’s so much easier to “tell.” But I have been amazed at how much more effective it is when my questions help people discover on their own the answer the Holy Spirit is giving them.

The good news is this is something anyone can grow in! So I’m asking God for the grace to be more like Him in this. And as I do, what a difference it’s making in my discipling!

# HEART TO HEART



## *Continuing To Grow In Trusting God for Life!*

FOCUS: 2 PETER 1:3-4

### HEAR

DISCUSS: What happened this past week when you took God up on His promise in James 1:5?

What did you learn about God as you did this?

In the past seven weeks, which promise was your favorite? Why?

SHARE: A Quiet Time in 2 Peter 1:3-4 (this is how you started this booklet. By ending with this, there is opportunity to see how much you've both grown as well as to hear what else the Lord wants to say to you through this passage)

### EXPLORE

READ: Not The End section (p. 51 in Tackle N' Trust) then show her the bookmark Praying God's Promises.



**SELECT:** a promise that connects with your life right now from either the Not The End section or one of the Promises on the bookmark

**SHARE:** how she can continue to learn more of God's promises and experience Him through them even beyond this booklet

**READ:** page 53 that summarizes the process included in this book to Memorize, Understand and Apply God's promises.

Have her teach you the promise she selects as you both memorize it together, first writing it on a 3X5 card, then memorizing it section by section.

## **A**PPLY

What could it look like for you to practically take God up on this promise?

How do you sense Him inviting you to do so?

Even beyond this newest promise you just memorized, what could it look like for you to continue to take God up on His promises for the rest of your life?

What difference do you think it could make in your life if you continued to do this?

## **R**EMEMBER

In 2 Peter 1:3-4 God's promises are described as very great and precious. What comes to mind as you read that now?

**Creatively Process:** I love to bring two little boxes, gold or wooden, if possible, to represent a treasure chest, along with a bunch of 2x3 inch cardstock rectangles. On each rectangle we write as many Promises as we can remember, then we put them into our treasure chests.

What do you want to remember from this Bible study on the promises of God?

What could you do to help you remember this?

## **T**ELL A FRIEND

1. **PRAY:** Share with Jesus what you're thankful for from this time as you take turns praying through the promises on the Praying God's Promises bookmark to end your time.

2. **PASS IT ON:** Who might you be able to share this with? What could it look like for you to do this?

# SHARED QUIET TIME

*Time In God's Word*

2 PETER 1:3-4

**LOOK:** (Read the three translations below and then write in your journal the verse or portion of a verse that stands out to you)

3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to[a] his own glory and excellence,[b] 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire. 2 Peter 1:3-4 ESV

3-4 Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God. The best invitation we ever received! We were also given absolutely terrific promises to pass on to you—your tickets to participation in the life of God after you turned your back on a world corrupted by lust. 2 Peter 1:3-4 MSG.

3 I can pray this because his divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence. 4 Through these things he has bestowed on us his precious and most magnificent promises, so that by means of what was promised you may become partakers of the divine nature, after escaping the worldly corruption that is produced by evil desire. 2 Peter 1:3-4 NET

**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.

**LET IT LAST:** Draw a picture summary of what stood out to you.

## THE BLESSING OF EACH OTHER

Luke's account of the Christmas story begins with failure.

After years of disappointment Zechariah receives an angelic visitor telling him his prayer has been heard and his wife is going to bear him a son! But instead of joy, he responds with disbelief.

“How shall I know this? For I am an old man and my wife is advanced in years...” and he ends up voiceless for the next nine months as a consequence.

Fast forward ten verses and the angel Gabriel makes another visit, this time to a young girl. When he tells her she's going to get pregnant without ever having known a man, and before she's even married, she responds, after a little clarification, “Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.” What faith!

But here's the question ~ was Mary more spiritually mature than Zechariah?

Remember, Zechariah is introduced as being righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. That's a pretty incredible intro!

Now we can't measure spiritual maturity on the basis of this alone, but here's a thought ~ it's one thing to trust the Lord when you are young and have no idea what you're getting into. It's a whole other to trust him after decades of disappointment, when you've finally resigned yourself to the reality your last opportunity passed years ago, when you've hoped and hurt so many times...

Does this ever illustrate why we need each other! Why the Lord tells older believers to invest in younger ones! Not just so the young will benefit but so those older will too.

Yes, when you're older you've had more time for your roots to grow deeper into the Lord – no amount of excitement can ever take the place of that. But, well, I guess I should say each season of life brings challenges in trusting and following Jesus.

Younger believers often have a harder time persevering because their roots aren't as deep so there can be much benefit for them having someone older come alongside encouraging and helping them hang in there when life turns out far more difficult than they anticipated.

But for those who are older, there is something so invigorating about the optimism of youth, when you are with someone and they've first experienced Jesus and can't get enough time with Him! When they're ready to go anywhere in the world without a second thought or do whatever he calls them to do, no matter the cost! It can be so infectious! And spur you on to do the same!

I remember shortly after I became a Christian writing a poem that began...

I'll climb the highest mountain, I'll sail the roughest sea

I'll travel to any distant land and live life dangerously

I'll brave the harshest winter, pushing onward through sleet and snow

I'm ready Lord. Do with me as you will, just show me the way I should go...

And I spent my years in college sleeping on a reed mat on the floor of my dorm room getting ready to do pioneer missions, to take the gospel where it hadn't been before and meeting with anyone who showed any interest at all to share with them about Jesus!

I remember someone commenting once I was a gift to the woman I met with because I was so excited about anything that had to do with God, at a time when she was wrestling with the reality she was probably going to be single the rest of her life and discouraged over shattered dreams. I better understand this now.

As I approach 50 it's not quite as easy to climb those mountains, and after having endured this past week's negative zero temps, I'm not certain how eager I'd be to push onward through sleet and snow – that's not only cold, that's wet!!!

We had a national staff conference a couple weeks ago and were so blessed to have Jim Downing and Jerry and Jane Bridges join us. I got to see first hand – It's a whole lot harder for them to come to these conferences than it is for someone 80 years younger! But how blessed the younger staff are to have them there – and what a delight to see the joy on their faces as they interact with new staff!

If the Lord keeps me here I so hope to follow in their footsteps. I want to follow Jesus however, wherever, whenever with whomever, but I'm much more aware of the cost now.

Do those I meet with ever keep me on my toes, challenging me to go out of my comfort zone.

Here's one other thing – note where Mary heads right after she gets this news... Straight to Zechariah and Elizabeth's house! Can you imagine the incredible one on ones she shared with Elizabeth during their three months together? And what a blessing that was to her, too?!

Don't you just love how the Lord works things out so we all get blessed as together we follow him?!

## THE ADVENTURE CONTINUES...

I will sing of the steadfast love of the Lord, forever;  
with my mouth I will make known your faithfulness to all generations.

Psalm 89:1

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

When Deb Entsminger isn't meeting one-on-one with women to help them get to know Jesus and go deeper in their walk with him, you will often find her off exploring with Jesus: Exploring God's Word, new ideas, new food, and new places. She loves to explore! She also loves to hear people's stories and to approach the Father's throne of grace with them, sharing their concerns and needs with the One who always cares.

She also loves to create practical tools that help people do what they are learning. One of her favorite verses is John 10:10 and she longs for everyone she meets to experience the abundance of life Jesus paid so dearly to make available to them. And does she ever LOVE to take God up on His promises and experience Him through them. What a mighty God we serve!