



NORTH GARLAND
BAPTIST Fellowship

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Girl Talk

The Discipline of Difficulty

“In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.” ~ John 16:33 (ESV)

An average view of the Christian life is that it means deliverance from trouble. It is deliverance in trouble, which is very different. “He that dwelleth in the secret place of the Most High...there shall no evil befall thee”—no plague can come nigh the place where you are at one with God. If you are a child of God, there certainly will be troubles to meet, but Jesus says do not be surprised when they come. “In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world, there is nothing for you to fear.” Men who before they were saved would scorn to talk about troubles, often become “fashionless“ after being born again because they have a wrong idea of a saint.

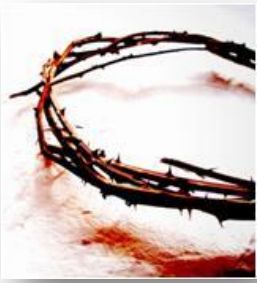
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God does not give us overcoming life: He gives us life as we overcome. The strain is the strength. If there is no strain, there is no strength. Are you asking God to give you life and liberty and joy? He cannot, unless you will accept the strain. Immediately you face the strain, you will get the strength. Overcome your own timidity and take the step, and God will give you to eat of the tree of life and you will get nourishment. If you spend yourself out physically, you become exhausted; but spend yourself spiritually, and you get more strength. God never gives strength for tomorrow, or for the next hour, but only for the strain of the minute. The temptation is to face difficulties from a common-sense standpoint. The saint is hilarious when he is crushed with difficulties because the thing is so ludicrously impossible to anyone but God.

Oswald Chambers, *My Utmost for His Highest*, (London: Barbour, 1927), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 215.

The Crucible



The other morning I wept through breakfast with a businessman who has been whiplashed into financial oblivion in a "down economy" through circumstances beyond his control. Highly capable in his field of expertise, he has chosen to tough it out and pay off his creditors rather than declare bankruptcy and walk away from debt.

Another friend who recently lost his wife through a sudden, devastating attack of cancer, is now left to raise their two young boys.

And a third, who was falsely accused of sexual incest, has endured years of litigation, coupled with unimaginable financial and emotional stress; only to be vindicated by the eventual recantation of his accuser.

Today, each of these men exhibit an uncommon spiritual depth and intimacy with Christ, unknown to them prior to their "crucible" experience.

It was C. S. Lewis who observed that *"God whispers to us in our pleasure, but shouts to us in our pain."* Someone has sagely noted that *"God rarely uses a man greatly until He hurts him deeply"* — including His own Son.

Before his devastating losses, Job was indeed a righteous man (1:1-5), but it was only after the agony of his *"dark night of the soul"* that he made the greatest journey of his life: The 18 inches from his head to his heart:

"My ears had heard of you but now my eyes have seen you." (Job 42:5)

So, where are you today? Cruising above the circumstances of life in blissful affluence and good health?

Or do you find yourself in the crucible of adversity through a state of affairs allowed or orchestrated by our loving Heavenly Father who cares infinitely more about the development of your character than in the comfort often afforded through easy circumstances?

"Now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may be proved genuine and may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed." (1 Peter 1:6, 7)

QUESTION: If you are in the middle of a "crucible" experience, are you choosing to praise and thank Him for the wonder He is working in your soul?

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"Wait"

Desperately, helplessly, longingly, I cried; quietly, patiently, lovingly God replied. I pled and I wept for a clue to my fate, and the Master who gently said, "Child, you must wait." Wait? You say, wait! my indignant reply. "Lord, I need answers, I need to know why! Is your hand shortened? Or have you not heard? By faith I have asked, and am claiming your Word. My future and all to which I can relate, hangs in the balance and You tell me to wait? I'm needing a 'yes' a go-ahead sign, or even a 'no' to which I can resign. And Lord, You promised that if we believe, we need but to ask, and we shall receive. Lord, I've been asking, and this is my cry: I'm weary of asking! I need a reply! Then quietly, softly, I learned of my fate, as my Master replied once again, "You must wait." So I slumped in my chair, defeated and taut, and grumbled to God, "So, I'm waiting... for what?"

He seemed then to kneel, and His eyes wept with mine, and He tenderly said, "I could give you a sign. I could shake the heavens, and darken the sun. I could raise the dead, and cause mountains to run. All you ask me I could give, and pleased you would be. You would have what you want – but you wouldn't know Me. You'd not know the depth of My love for each saint: You'd not know the power that I give to the faint. You'd not learn to see through the clouds of despair: You'd not learn to trust just by knowing I'm there. You'd not know the joy of resting in Me when darkness and silence were all you can see. You'd never experience that fullness of love, as the peace of My Spirit descends like a dove. You'd know that I live and I save... (for a start), but you'd not know the depth of the beat of My heart."

"The glow of My comfort late into the night. The faith that I give when you walk without sight. The depth that's beyond getting just what you asked, of an infinite God who makes what you have last. You'd never know, should your pain quickly flee, what it means that 'My grace is sufficient for Thee.' Yes, your dreams for your loved one overnight would come true. But oh, the loss if I lost what I'm doing in you! So be silent my child, and in time you will see, that the greatest of gifts is to get to know Me. And though oft' may My answers seem terribly late, My most precious answer of all is still, 'wait.'"

Author Unknown



Whatever The Cost

“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” ~ Romans 12:1-2 (NASB)

Now is the time for a movement of reformation and revival in the hearts and homes of Christian women all around this world. *Now is the time* to go against the flow. I believe God has brought you into His kingdom for such a time as this.

Teens: That means the willingness to follow Christ and His Word when it seems that all the other girls your age are consumed with beauty, guys, self, sex, and having a good time. It means setting your affections on Christ, guarding your heart, choosing the pathway of purity, and becoming a Truth-speaker in your generation when all your peers seem to be going the opposite direction.

Single women: That means choosing the pathway of contentment. It means being willing to be married or single—whichever God has for you—for His glory and the sake of His kingdom. It means using your singleness to serve the Lord without distraction. It means being willing to be sexually pure and to be a servant of the family of God.

Married women: It’s a call to be faithful in a world of broken promises—to love your husband, to pray for him, to build a marriage that glorifies God. It means being faithful in the good times and the hard times. It means saying yes to your high and holy calling of being a helper to your husband, reverencing him as the Scripture exhorts, submitting to him as a picture of your submission to Christ Himself. It means giving yourself wholeheartedly to your husband and saying no to emotional or physical intimacy with any other man.

Mothers: That means embracing the calling and gift of being a giver and a nurturer of life. Don’t let the world tell you how many or how few children to have. Let God give you His vision for the impact that your children and grandchildren could make for His kingdom for generations to come. Do battle in prayer for the souls of your children and your grandchildren.

Older women: It means choosing not to retire spiritually. Don’t settle for a life consumed by golf, bridge, meaningless

activity, and preoccupation with self. Younger women need you. They need your counsel, encouragement, and prayers. They need you to take them under your wings and help them learn how to live lives that please the Lord.

I often say to women, “We’ve got to be willing to be salmon swimming upstream.” What do salmon do? They get bloodied and beat up on the rocks in order to give birth and produce life. Then what do they do? They die. You say, “That doesn’t sound like something I want to be called to.” But what a picture that is of the heart of Christ, who swam upstream—bloodied and beaten—to give spiritual life; laying down His life on Calvary to give us eternal life. We may die in the process, but if we die fulfilling the kingdom purposes and will of God for our lives, so be it. If we perish, we perish. Let’s go for broke!

That’s what Amy Carmichael did for over 55 years. She risked her life to rescue little girls who had been sold into prostitution in the Hindu temples—one young woman at a time. She worked tirelessly to salvage those lives and to expose the works of darkness that had claimed so many children’s lives in India. Each step of the way she was fighting and pushing against the powers of darkness—not in her own strength, but in the strength and power of God who had sent her there. She endured and persevered through all those years with a handful of victories, but also with numerous heartbreaking losses and apparent defeats.

The issues around us are no less serious than those of those little girls sold into temple prostitution. Women and girls all around us are in bondage to guilt, fear, bitterness, anxiety, eating disorders, sinful behaviors, addictions, and depression. They need to be rescued from the enemy who has taken them captive.. We are called to fight the powers of darkness in the name, power, and Spirit of the Lord Jesus and to join God in His great rescue operation. We’re called to shine the light in the darkness, to see captives set free, and to see God glorified. If you’re like me, you feel inspired and grateful to help with

such a mission, but on the other hand, there is a real sense of weakness and overwhelming inadequacy.

In these times of fear, the Lord reminds me of that passage in Luke 1 when the angel came to Mary and said, “You’re going to have a baby—God’s Son. I know you’re not married and you’ve never been intimate with a man, but this is what God is going to do.” Mary asked the obvious question, “How can this be? It’s not physically possible.” The angel said to Mary, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.”

Who’s going to win the battle? God is. Who’s going to fill you with power? God is. “Nothing will be impossible with God,” the angel said. What was Mary’s response? Mary said simply, in faith, humility, and surrender, “I am the Lord’s servant. May it be to me as you have said.” Mary said, “Yes, Lord.” If you were to ask her today, “Was it worth it, Mary? Would you do it again?” Do you have any doubt about what she would say? “Yes, it was worth it. The Savior was born!”

His calling on our lives will involve hardship, suffering, and obstacles. It’s not a calling to comfort, convenience, and self-fulfillment. It’s a calling to glorify God with the laying down of our lives, just as our Savior was willing to lay down His life so that we could live.

When you and I see the face of Christ—if we’ve been faithful in fulfilling His calling in our lives—we will say, “Jesus, it was worth it all for You.” In fact, I think most—if not all of us—will say, “I wish I’d given You more.”

I’m asking God to raise up a great host of women—women of courage, faith, compassion, humility, and wisdom. Women filled with Jesus for such a time as this. Will you join me in that mission? Will you be a part of that counter-cultural revolution?

Will you say, “Yes, Lord. I am Your servant. Take me, use me, spend me. Fulfill all Your holy, eternal purposes in and through my life, whatever the cost?”

Prayer and Its Discontents

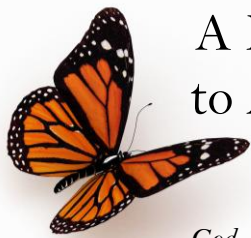
Prayer is many things to many people. To the Muslim it is a daily ritual, to the Catholic it is a work that helps merit salvation, and to the evangelical Christian it is often a struggle. Books are written, classes are taught, all with the purpose to teach Christians how to have a better prayer life. That is because if we are honest with ourselves, the majority of us struggle with prayer. We live in a society of instant gratification. Many of us have been socially conditioned to expect to receive whatever we want whenever we want it. I truly believe that this is why prayer is difficult for most of us, because so often we do not see immediate results.

Over the last year, the Lord has taught me a great deal about prayer. Ever since I was a little girl, I have had a deep yearning to be a mother. For the last year, my husband and I had hoped to start a family, but encountered many difficulties along the way,

including some health issues on my part. I was beginning to wonder if I may ever bear children. I prayed to the Lord daily, requesting that He would open my womb. For many months His answer was clear; it was not time yet. While I did not understand His answer, I continued to pray for His mercy.

Before this time, like many fellow believers, my prayer life was inconsistent, and I believe that the Lord used my desire for a child to bring me closer to Him. And for that I am grateful. Prayer teaches us to rely solely on our Father, often forcing us to admit our complete dependence on Him. Throughout Scripture the Lord commands us to trust in Him and to make our requests known to Him through prayer. One portion of Scripture that speaks clearly to me is a simple reminder found in Philippians 4:6: *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”* While this seems like a simple passage of Scripture, it is far too easy for us to get caught up in the busyness of our lives, focused on the various concerns of the day. The Lord reminds us to be anxious in nothing, but to let all of our requests be known to Him. Prayer is something most of us need to work on, since for many of us it remains a constant struggle. In the days and weeks ahead, commit yourself to prayer, and fervently let your requests be made known to God daily. Why? Because this brings us closer to Him.

By Kaki Cobb. From Ligonier Ministries and R.C. Sproul. © Tabletalk magazine. Website: www.ligonier.org/tabletalk. Email: tabletalk@ligonier.org. Toll free: 1-800-435-4343



A Butterfly Used to Answer Prayer

“Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh; is anything too difficult for Me?” ~ Jeremiah 32:27

An English evangelist, whom I have learned to know and love, Mr. H. P. Barker, tells an interesting story of a poor woman who was being pressed by a tradesman to pay an account which she knew she had already settled. In that case he demanded that she produce a receipt; quite certain she had received one she hunted and hunted, but was absolutely unable to find it. She went through piles of papers and letters, but to no avail—the receipt was not forthcoming. Finally the tradesman came to her again and made a very angry demand upon her for immediate payment.

In her distress she turned to the Lord in earnest prayer, asking Him to bring the receipt to light. Then in a moment or two, a butterfly flew into the room through an open window, and her little boy, eager to catch the beautiful creature, ran after it. The frightened insect flew over to the wall on one side and down behind a trunk. The boy in his eagerness to catch it, pushed out the trunk, and there, behind it on the floor lay the missing receipt! Snatching it up triumphantly, the poor widow showed it to the tradesman, who went away discomfited. As his own handwriting declared, the debt had been paid.

Who can doubt but that He who notes the sparrow's fall and who would have us learn lessons from the ant and the coney and other small creatures, directed even the movements of a butterfly in order that He might answer His handmaiden's prayer!

H. A. Ironside, “A Butterfly Used to Answer Prayer,” in *Illustrations of Bible Truth*, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1945), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 54.



Other things being equal, your growth and mine into the likeness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be in exact proportion to the time and to the heart we put into prayer.

Please note exactly what I say: “Your growth and mine into the likeness of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be in exact proportion to the time and to the heart we put into prayer.” I put it in that way because there are many who put a great deal of time but so little heart into their praying that they do very little praying in the long time they spend at it.

On the other hand, there are others who, perhaps, may not put so much time into praying but put so much heart into praying that they accomplish vastly more by their praying in a short time than the others accomplish by praying in a long time. God Himself has told us in Jeremiah 29:13:

“And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.”

R.A. Torrey, *A Treasury of Great Preaching*, (Austin, TX: WORDsearch Corp., 2005), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: “The Power Of Prayer”.



Loving Your Husband Before You Get Married



In my first year as a Christian, I attended or was part of 13 weddings, including the weddings of my two younger sisters and one ex boyfriend. The Lord was working overtime on the sin of self-pity that year, but out of His sanctifying work came my informal “ministry” of a wedding coordinator. I started by helping one of my sisters, and as the word got around, I ended up serving countless friends.

At a recent rehearsal dinner, someone asked me if it was difficult as an unmarried woman to be so involved in these weddings. I was glad to genuinely say no. That wasn’t always my answer, however. I can clearly recall sitting at many wedding receptions with the wind knocked out of me due to the bitterness in my heart. I would evaluate each aspect of the weddings I attended and plan for how “my” special day would surpass the event unfolding before me. Like any Cinderella devotee, the highlight of my life would be that special moment when the doors were opened and all eyes, most especially those of My Prince, would be on me. What happened in the “happily ever after” part was the fine print. It was going to be *all about me* on that day. And probably for every day after that, too.

Maybe this is why the apostle Paul thought it was of paramount importance that the older women *teach* the younger women how to love their husbands. As always, the Bible is radically counter-cultural to the self-centered worldview spoon-fed to young girls through fairy tales and force-fed to young women through movies, magazines, and music. We have to learn how to step out of the princess spotlight and learn how to love well in the way God defines love. A wedding isn’t the kick-off to Happily Ever After. It’s only a segue into a new season with new and different opportunities to demonstrate Christ-like love that weren’t present when single.

Doing Him Good All The Days of Your Life

King Lemuel was taught well by his mother, and his wisdom was memorialized in the 31st Proverb. Writing of the virtuous woman, he said that her husband has full confidence in her, and she will do him good and not evil all the days of her life.

That’s all the days of her life—days before and days after marriage. If you’re single, there are things you can do now to sow good seeds for a godly marriage. What if you’re not sure if you’ll be married? Though marriage is the norm for most, not all of us will receive that gift—that’s true—but we’re still called to prepare.

“Problems in marriage are *always* the result of self-centeredness,” writes Douglas Wilson in *Her Hand in Marriage*. “So the time a person spends when he is single should be time spent in preparation for marriage. This is important even if he never gets married. This is because biblical preparation for marriage is nothing more than learning to follow Jesus Christ and love one’s neighbor. In other words, preparation for Christian marriage is basically the same as preparation for Christian living. Christians

are to prepare for marriage by learning self-denial, subduing their pride, and putting their neighbor first. Once they learn to love God and love their neighbor, they are prepared to enter into the covenant of marriage with one of their neighbors.”

Growing in *Philandros* Love

In her outstanding teaching series on the Titus 2 virtues, Carolyn Mahaney notes that the phrase “love their husbands” is only one word in the Greek. It is the compound word *philandros*, derived from *phileo* (a warm affection) and *andros* (man). Loving your husband with a tender, warm, deeply affectionate love might seem like a no-brainer until you think about the caricatures of long-married women in our culture: dismissive, disrespectful, bored, shrewish. Cultivating and maintaining that tender affection can, at times, take some work.

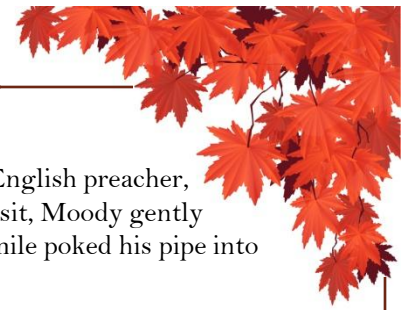
Single women can prepare to grow in *philandros* love now by understanding the doctrines of sin and God’s sovereignty. If God has marriage for us (His sovereign plan), one thing we need to settle now in our hearts is that we won’t be marrying Prince Charming; we will be marrying a sinner (the doctrine of indwelling sin) as will our husbands! So now we can do the “heartwork” to cultivate *philandros* love by working on what undermines it: the bitterness, selfishness, fear, and sinful judgment resident in us. When and if God brings us into a new season of marriage, this preparation will help us cultivate tender thoughts and behavior toward our husbands. Though there’s not space for a comprehensive treatment of these topics, below are some questions we can consider before the Lord while still single:

- **Bitterness:** Is there any unforgiveness in your heart against the men you’ve dated or against the men who have never asked you out? Do you regard the single men in your life as brothers in the Lord or as potential husbands? Do you grumble and complain on a regular basis about being single? (Ephesians 4:31-32)
- **Selfishness:** Are you willing to serve the “unlovely” or the “least” in your church or circle of friends, even when no one is watching? Do you defer to others, esteeming them as better than yourself, or do you insist on your way? Do you view your time and schedule now as a single as a season to indulge yourself or to be more available to serve others? (Philippians 2:3-4)
- **Fear:** Do you trust God for your future or do you think He has forgotten you? Do you think others will betray you and thus “mess up” God’s plan for your life? (Romans 8:28-39)
- **Sinful judgment:** Do you speculate about the single men around you, for good or bad? Are you assigning motives for their actions without asking humbly for information? Are you constantly comparing yourself with other women? (James 3:13-4:3)

Whether or not the Lord attaches an *andros* to our *phileo* love, this kind of “heartwork” is crucial to growing in the likeness of Christ. By working to become more like our Lord and Savior, we will be worthy of the full trust of both our earthly husbands (should we get married) and, ultimately, our heavenly Bridegroom.

By Carolyn McCulley. Reprinted from the magazine *Joyful Woman*

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Taking Care of God's Temple, Your Body

In the mid-19th Century the American evangelist, D. L. Moody paid a visit to the renowned English preacher, C. H. Spurgeon. Moody bordered on the obese and Spurgeon enjoyed his pipe. During their visit, Moody gently chided Spurgeon for smoking a pipe. In response, Spurgeon leaned forward, and with a wry smile poked his pipe into Moody's belly.

Does the Bible address the issue of physical fitness? 1 Timothy 4:8 makes this point: *"Physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things."* Literally: Physical training has value for a few days, with little application outside its own discipline, while training in godliness has extensive application. It is interesting to observe that the preponderance of Scriptures dealing with health draw a strong correlation between inner peace and soundness of body. For example: *"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 3:7, 8)

It is difficult however, to imagine Jesus being out of shape physically. Certainly Luke 2:52 gives us a clue as to the balance in His life in the mental, physical, spiritual and social realms: *"And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."*

As Christ's Ambassadors, does it not stand to reason that we should take care of His temple in such a way that we are attractive to the people we are attempting to win? Certainly a reasonable, disciplined approach to physical fitness is an appropriate step in that direction. (2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Corinthians 3:17; 6:19)

Question: What are you doing to maintain your "temple" in a manner that is honoring to God?

How Is It Going In The "Time With God" Department?

Rushed? Shallow? Dutiful?

Or do you have it under control with: Quality time... Regular time... At the level where the tap roots of your soul are being fed? E. M. Bounds cautions us that *"to be little with god is to be little for God."*

Keep in mind: Satan's strategy is to *dull your spiritual hunger* by playing upon your inclination towards:

- Procrastination
- Materialism
- Sensuality
- Over-work

"Take care... lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin." (Hebrews 3:12, 13). Let's be honest enough to admit that basically we do *exactly* what we want to do, finding time for:

- Golf
- T.V.
- Favored friends

And let's be reminded that a *casual approach* to knowing God simply won't cut it: *"You shall seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart."* (Jeremiah 29:1)

Passion and pursuit are the criteria for knowing God. Are you man or woman enough to rise to and sustain the challenge?

Guard Your Heart

"Watch over your heart with all diligence, for from it flow the springs of life."

~Proverbs 4:23a

Ah, the "heart"... that is where our problems lie, is it not? The heart here represents your ethical center, your intellectual center: What you think, what is going on with your will, your perceptions of yourself and your knowledge of God. The condition of your heart is critical because what goes on there determines the course of your life.

So... guard what is happening in your *HEART* with all diligence.

Picture your *physical* heart pumping blood through the arteries to the extremities of the body. The health of the heart determines the health of the body. So it is with your *spiritual* heart. What goes on there affects all the extremities of your life. Want to keep your heart pure?

Then check your *ACTIONS* in three areas:

1. Your speech: *"Put away from you a deceitful mouth, and put devious lips far from you."* (Proverbs 4:24)

Question: Is your speech truthful?... Straightforward?... Or misleading?

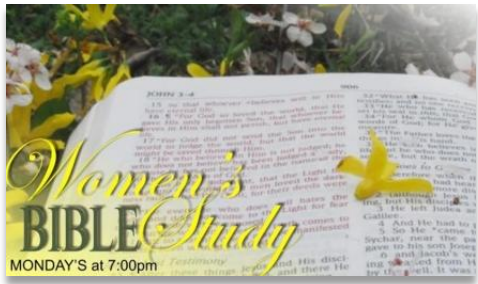
2. Your eyes: *"Let your eyes look directly ahead, and let your gaze be fixed straight in front of you."* (Proverbs 4:5)

Question: Are you looking *only* at things that enhance your mind and your morals?... Or do you have *wandering* eyes?

3. Your path: *"Watch the path of your feet and all your ways will be established. Do not turn to the right nor to the left; turn your foot from evil."* (Proverbs 4:26)

Question: Are you only going to places that keep your heart pure... Or are you drifting into *questionable* areas?

Upcoming Events



The Women's Bible Study is on hiatus until Fall 2010. Information on dates, study leader(s) and topics to be announced



Stay tuned for venue, registration and fee information coming soon!



So, what is a True Woman? A woman *willing* to surrender every area of her life to reflect the beauty and heart of Christ to the world. She's serious about obeying God, determined, by His grace, to live up to His Word in her life! A True Woman is *you* and at True Woman '10 Conferences, you're going to meet women just like you who know that "now is the time"—your time to be intentional! **Join us for the True Women '10 Conference October 14-16, 2010 at the Ft. Worth Convention Center.** Conference speakers will be Nancy Leigh DeMoss, Kay Arthur, Crawford & Karen Loritts, and many others. Registration: Adult—\$105 (group of 5 or more); Individual—\$129; At the door—\$159; Student* \$74 (group of 5 or more); Individual—\$94; at the door—\$124. For more information and to register, visit www.truewoman.com

* Full-time high school, college or seminary students

Sunday, September 12

Senior Citizens Day – special services honoring our senior members and visitors at the **8:00 and 11:00 AM services**

Sunday, September 19

NGBF Christian Ed. Quarterly Bible Study and Fellowship Breakfast **9:30 AM in the Fellowship Hall**

Sunday, September 19

Unity in the Community, hosted by Mt. Hebron Missionary Baptist Church **beginning at 6:00 PM.** Featured Speaker: Dr. Tony Evans

Saturday, October 23

Reunion at the 'Ship Church Anniversary Celebration and Picnic **Festivities begin at 10:00 AM**
Sign up online or at the church office to register your attendance and to sign up for the non-competitive talent show

Sunday, October 24

Reunion at the 'Ship celebrations continue with special Sunday services featuring very special guests at **8:00 and 11:00 AM**

The Reading Room: Recommended Reading

Sacred Marriage: What if God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy

by Gary L. Thomas

Your marriage is more than a sacred covenant with another person. It is a spiritual discipline designed to help you know God better, trust him more fully, and love him more deeply. Scores of books have been written that offer guidance for building the marriage of your dreams. But what if God's primary intent for your marriage isn't to make you happy . . . but holy? And what if your relationship isn't as much about you and your spouse as it is about you and God?

Everything about your marriage—everything—is filled with prophetic potential, with the capacity for discovering and revealing Christ's character. The respect you accord your partner; the forgiveness you humbly seek and graciously extend; the ecstasy, awe, and sheer fun of lovemaking; the history you and your spouse build with one another—in these and other facets of your marriage, Sacred Marriage uncovers the mystery of God's overarching purpose. This book may very well alter profoundly the contours of your marriage. It will most certainly change you. Because whether it is delightful or difficult, your marriage can become a doorway to a closer walk with God, and to a spiritual integrity that, like salt, seasons the world around you with the savor of Christ. *Publisher's Description*

Lord, Only You Can Change Me

by Kay Arthur

Can God Really Change You from the Inside Out? Yes! Who are you...on the inside? Are you growing into the image of Christ? Or are you far from being all you want to be in the Lord? If you've ever wondered how you can truly change, now there's hope. Jesus invites you to stop trying to develop godliness through your own efforts and to start relying on the indwelling Holy Spirit. Enjoy the expanded and updated editions of the best-selling "Lord" Bible Study Series from Kay Arthur. The "Lord" study series is an insightful, warm-hearted Bible study series designed to meet readers where they are—and help them discover God's answers to their deepest needs. *PD*

Choosing Gratitude: The Path to Joy

by Nancy Leigh DeMoss

Gratitude is a choice. If we fail to choose it, by default we choose ingratitude. And once allowed into the heart, ingratitude does not come by itself but with a lot of other seedy companions that only succeed in stealing joy. To not choose gratitude - daily and deliberately - is more costly than we usually realize. And when we do choose a lifestyle of heartfelt, humble gratitude, we are mindful of the benefits received from our gracious Savior and those He has placed around us. By intentionally thanking God and others, bitterness and entitlement are replaced with joy and the humble realization of just how undeserving we really are. Derived from a popular Revive Our Hearts radio series, Choosing Gratitude: The Path to Joy challenges and equips the reader to live a life of intention. A life based on thankfulness - for the freedom Christ has provided and for the blessings of others. *PD*

Temptations Women Face: Honest Talk About Jealousy, Anger, Sex, Money, Food, Pride

by Mary Ellen Ashcroft

Mary Ellen Ashcroft knows about the confusing thoughts and feelings that women experience. In this book she writes about where the needs and motivations of women come from, what temptations hook into these needs, and how women can get beyond them. Ashcroft maintains that we should look honestly at our temptations and ask what they tell us about ourselves. She believes God's intention is not simply that we avoid, resist, or flee temptation, but that we use it to fire our spiritual growth in areas of life we have neglected. *Temptations Women Face* shows the way through each temptation and how women can, day by day, begin to build a life pleasing to God. *PD*

Girls Gone Wise in a World Gone Wild

by Mary Kassian

Girls have gone wild! And we're not just talking about someone from the romance novel or star from the latest hit movie. She's the girl next door, your best friend, or someone in your family. She may even be you. That's because the longing, the thrill, and the fun is real. Very real. Mary Kassian isn't naive to that. But she knows there's another side to it—the devastation and heartache being wild can bring. Her insights from Proverbs on the differences between a saucy, seductive Wild Thing and a smart, biblically-savvy Wise Thing is a must read. Every minute you spend here will help you—or someone you love—replace the emptiness and guilt of being wild with the power of living out God's spectacular design for women. *PD*

