

WELL-WATERED WOMEN CO.



AN EBOOK ON
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

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INTRODUCTION

A Letter from Gretchen

Dear Sister,

One day, I wake up before dawn and start the day soaking in the Word while sipping my coffee. The next, I press snooze and get to the end of the day without cracking open my Bible. One day, I hear alarming news and still praise God and trust him with what's to come. The next, I find myself questioning him and worrying about tomorrow. One day, Jesus is first in my heart and everything else falls into place. The next, I put him second and the dominos start to fall, and I can't catch them because I don't go to him for help.

What is it that makes the difference between these contrasting days? The difference is what I put first—or shall I say, *who* I put first.

C.S. Lewis pinpointed the root of this struggle, explaining, “You can’t get second things by putting them first. You can get second things only by putting first things first.”¹ If we want to have full, abundant life on earth, we won’t get it by seeking the things of this world. When

¹ C.S. Lewis, “First and Second Things,” in *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics* (Eerdmans, revised edition 1994), 280.

spending time with Jesus is the first thing we do, when thinking about his Word fills our mind first thing, when we come back to him again and again throughout the day, the second things fall into place.

When second things are the center of our lives, we quickly lose all stability because we can lose second things at any moment. Good health can be lost with one test result from the doctor's office. A comfortable home can be lost in one storm. A large bank account can be lost with one tragedy. A social media account can be lost with one change in the platform's policy. And when second things are first in our hearts, our lives fall apart when we lose them. But when first things are the delight of our souls—spending time with God in fellowship through Scripture, prayer, and worship—we hold the greatest treasure in the world that cannot be stripped away from us.

So let me ask you a question I ask myself often: what is first in your life? What do you think about first thing? When the alarm goes off? When the sudden news of disaster reaches your doorstep? When lies clang like cymbals in your mind, causing your nerves to stand on edge? *Before anything else, behind closed doors, what does your heart desire?*

If the answer is anything but Jesus, now is the time to confess your need for him and come back to his Word. When Jesus is first in our lives, we have everything to gain. When we treasure Jesus, we are

actually able to enjoy the things of this world to the fullest! Jesus doesn't drain the joy out of the second things in life—he *adds* to them.

My prayer is that this ebook about spiritual disciplines helps you establish habits that put Jesus first in your life. We were created to be well-watered women who find all our satisfaction and joy in Christ alone. May these spiritual disciplines create daily rhythms of reliance upon God, so we may become women who put Jesus first every day of our lives.

JESUS FIRST IN EVERYTHING,

Gretchen Saffus
Founder



CHAPTER 1

BIBLE STUDY

How sweet are your words to my taste,
sweeter than honey to my mouth!

PSALM 119:103

We don't study the Bible to check an item off our to-do list or fulfill an obligation; we study the Bible out of a deep love for God and a desire to know him more through his holy, inspired, revealed Word. Each day, you can open your Bible and meet with your Maker. This rhythm is vital in the daily life of a believer—to immerse yourself in the life-giving Word so you are equipped to go out into the world.

Spending time with God in his Word changes everything.

We can't love God unless we know him, and we can't know him unless we spend time in his Word. Bible study feels harder some days than others, but remember: the more you taste Jesus, the more the world will lose its flavor. Time in God's Word will train your soul to desire what satisfies, train your mind to be grounded in truth, and train your heart to love God above all else (see Ps. 19:7–9).

Prioritizing time in God's Word is a mindset shift, a lifestyle renovation, a daily motivation to know Jesus personally and fully. It's a daily admission that we are not the main characters of our lives—he is. Committing to Bible study is a resolution we can make every day as we pursue a deeper walk with the Lord by spending consistent time in God's Word.

DISCIPLINE IN ACTION

1. CHOOSE A PLACE

Whether it's at the kitchen table, in your favorite chair, or at your desk, decide where you'll regularly spend time with the Lord. Gather materials you use to study the Word—your Bible, your Give Me Jesus Journal, Bible study stickers, and pens and highlighters—and keep them nearby. By creating a spot with everything you need to study God's Word, you'll eliminate one obstacle to reading your Bible.

2. SET A TIME

No matter your season, give Jesus your best moments. Decide on the best time in your day for regular Bible study. On days when this time gets interrupted or your schedule changes, remember that even just a

few minutes in the Word can refresh your soul and renew your mind as you fellowship with your Father.

3. MAKE A PLAN

Decide on a book of the Bible you'll study and stick with it. You'll get the most out of your daily time in the Word if you settle down in one book of the Bible to study fully. Remember, all of God's Word is profitable (2 Tim. 3:16). Study Old and New Testament books, knowing they are intricately woven together to tell one story of redemptive grace. Trust the Lord to speak through his Word each day and come with a humble and hungry heart for more of Jesus.

CHAPTER 2

PRAYER

Rejoice always, pray without ceasing,
give thanks in all circumstances; for this
is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:16–18

Prayer is the breath of a believer. It is essential to our spiritual well-being and an expression of our need for God. Prayer is a magnificent gift from God, yet we often ignore or forget it in the busyness of everyday life.

Because of Jesus' death on the cross, we can draw near to the throne of grace with confidence (Heb. 10:19–22). The blood of Jesus covers our sins and

offers us access to the greatest privilege: talking to our holy Father just as we are, wherever we are.

When we pray, we are to ask, seek, and knock, trusting that God is faithful to answer us in whatever way is for our good and for his glory (Matt. 7:7–11). Prayer is not a magical way of getting what we want and avoiding all suffering. Rather, prayer is a means of changing our hearts and submitting our wills to God's sovereign plan. Instead of placing our faith in our prayers, we place our faith in the One to whom we pray, who loves us deeply and knows what is best.

If we want to flourish spiritually, we must be women who pray fervently. As women who love God and his Word, our prayers should be saturated with phrases, themes, and even exact verses that we've memorized from the Word. When we pray in line with the Bible, we are praying within the will of God. Prayer exalts God and reveals our need for him as we communicate with him daily.

DISCIPLINE IN ACTION

In your journal or a notebook, write out the days of the week. Next to each day, write specific requests or people to pray for. Write a specific verse to pray for each need, that you might pray within God's will for each request. Keep this list in your Bible, by your kitchen sink, in your car, or with your toothbrush to remember to pray for these requests daily.

CHAPTER 3

CONFESSIO^N

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

We often want to avoid confession because it's messy, raw, and humbling. We would rather hide our weaknesses than expose them, and it's simply uncomfortable to face our sin. However, the discomfort of confession honors Jesus' sacrifice on the cross and proclaims a foundational truth of the gospel: we are not righteous, and we need the perfect record of our Savior to cleanse us (Rom. 3:23–24). Our holy God

cannot overlook the presence of sin. Jesus' death on the cross bridged the gap between God's holiness and our sinfulness. In order to be near God, we must confess our sin and have the blood of Jesus wash over us (1 John 1:9). Confession is a gospel grace that is meant to bring us freedom.

Confession is not just about us; it is about the freedom and unity of our brothers and sisters in Christ. Not only does confession set us free, it also sets others free. In the body of Christ, we are to confess our sins to one another (James 5:16). Confession requires vulnerability and trust. When we are obedient to confess, we are set free from a life of hypocrisy. Confession breaks the weighty chains of perfection that grip our hearts and opens the doors to God's presence.

Through confession, we admit we are weak-willed women constantly in need of God's grace. Confession should be a central discipline in the believer's life, both corporately and privately. Let's come to God

with our hands open to be washed in the blood of Jesus and live in freedom.

DISCIPLINE IN ACTION

Psalm 51 lets us peek through the window at King David's repentance as he confesses his sin to God (if you have time today, read the entire psalm). This psalm is a prayer of a man who is weak, needy, and aware of his sin. King David recognizes that he is a sinner and that only humbly accepting his state and crying out for washing will lead to his acceptance before a holy God. We can follow his example, admitting our need to be cleansed by the blood of Jesus.

1. CORRECTLY IDENTIFY YOUR SAVIOR

Psalm 51 begins with David appealing to God's steadfast love and mercy to cleanse him from his sin

(vv. 1–2). He is admitting that he cannot save himself or make himself clean—only God is able.

2. CORRECTLY IDENTIFY YOUR SIN

This is often the hardest part. It's tempting to gloss over your sin because confession is painful. But when the Holy Spirit gives you eyes to see how you've strayed from God, don't use nice names for your sin. Don't call it comparison instead of envy or frustration instead of anger. In verse 3, King David says, "For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me." Being willing to name your sin its wrongness helps you experience the wonder of God's grace.

3. GRIEVE YOUR SIN

This isn't being sorry you got caught or embarrassed that someone may have seen that you aren't perfect.

King David admits, “Against you, you only, have I sinned” (v. 4) and asserts that God is pleased with a “broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart” (v. 17). Give yourself time to be broken over your sin so that you may be healed by God’s grace.

4. TURN FROM YOUR SIN TO YOUR SAVIOR

King David’s cries for salvation turn into words of worship for the One who saves him (vv. 14–15). When your heart is made clean, it overflows in praise to the One who washed it. As we draw near to God, we’ll find that we sin less and we worship more.

CHAPTER 4

WORSHIP

Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us
exalt his name together!

PSALM 34:3

I asked my husband the other morning how he would define worship. After thinking it over for a few minutes, he said, “Acknowledging who God is.” When we view worship as acknowledging who God is, every area of our lives is necessarily changed. Worship is more than singing at church. Worship is a humble acknowledgment of God’s glory that transforms our stories.

We are always worshipping something or someone, and our actions are directly connected to what we worship. If we worship ourselves, we will do anything to get glory or experience comfort. If we worship another person, we will do anything for their attention. If we worship a gift of this world, we won't be happy unless we get it. But when we worship the true and living God, we are content and joyful because this is what we were made to do (Isa. 43:7, 21; Ps. 95:6).

We worship when we rise early in the morning to begin our day with God. We worship as our day fills with mundane activities such as changing diapers, attending meetings, completing classwork, washing dishes, folding clothes, and caring for others when we do it all for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

Full schedules and distractions of this world may threaten to steal the focus of our worship. But when we humbly acknowledge who God is, we can lay down our desires and worship him by directing our hands,

our feet, our words, and our thoughts to the things of God, doing everything for his glory (Col. 3:17).

DISCIPLINE IN ACTION

In your journal or a notebook, list your primary roles. Next to each one, write what it would look like to worship God in it.

Next, list your regular, everyday tasks. Next to each one, write what it would look like to worship God as you complete it.

CHAPTER 5

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

This Book of the Law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do according to all that is written in it. For then you will make your way prosperous, and then you will have good success.

JOSHUA 1:8

The apostle Paul tells us in Philippians 4:8 to think on what is true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise. Why? The answer is found in verse 9: “practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.” Even when our lives feel

chaotic, we can receive the peace of God through memorizing and meditating on God's Word—the lamp to our feet and the light to our path (Ps. 119:105). We are always trying to make sense of the world around us. When we hide God's Word in our hearts, it permeates how we think about the world and what we believe about ourselves and our circumstances. God's Word is our direction, our life, our light in the darkness, and our hope.

Memorizing Scripture arms you with truth to fight against the lies of the world. When you memorize Scripture, you learn to live according to God's truth, not according to your intuition or feelings. As you memorize God's Word, you are putting on the armor of God and standing firm in truth (Eph. 6:13–17).

In John 8:31–32, Jesus says, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” If you want to experience freedom in Christ, you need to know his

Word in order to abide in it. The word *abide* in this passage means to remain, to be present, to hold and keep continually. We can do this by memorizing God's Word. As you memorize Scripture, meditate on God's ways and your worship will overflow into your actions. So hide God's Word in your heart, that you may live a fruitful life according to his Word.

DISCIPLINE IN ACTION

Use the daily action steps below to memorize a verse this week.

SUNDAY

Choose a verse to memorize and meditate on. Study its context.

MONDAY

Write the verse out three times.

TUESDAY

Read the verse three times and ask yourself: *What does this teach me about God or the gospel?*

WEDNESDAY

Write the first letter of each word in the verse and practice reciting the verse three times using its initials.

THURSDAY

Read the verse three times and ask yourself: *How does this change the way I live?*

FRIDAY

Write the verse from memory.

SATURDAY

Recite the verse to a friend or family member.



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