

Women of the Word: Chapter 8 Pulling It All Together

With my whole heart I seek you; let me not wander from your commandments! I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. Psalm 119:10-11

★ Let the Bible Speak of God

"There can be no true knowledge of self apart from the knowledge of God. He is the only reference point that is reliable."

★ Let the Mind Transform the Heart

"The heart cannot love what the mind does not know."

Step 1: Begin with Purpose

Understanding where your text fits into the Big Story of **creation**, **fall**, **redemption**, and **restoration**

Step 2: Get Perspective on the Book You Will Be Studying

Understanding the "archaeology" of your text (its historical and cultural context)

- *Who wrote it?*
- *When was it written?*
- *To whom was it written?*
- *In what style was it written? (historical narrative, parable/storytelling, law, poetry, wisdom literature, and prophecy)*
- *Why was it written?*

Step 3: Begin the Process of Comprehension – Interpretation – Application

Comprehension: **What does it say?**

- Does the text contain repeated words, phrases, or ideas?
- Does it mention attributes of God (things that are true about him)?
- Does the text make several points in a row? Number each point as it is introduced in the text.
- Did you come across words you don't understand? Mark them with a question mark. Look them up in the dictionary and write a definition or synonym for them on your copy.
- Does the passage include key transition words, such as *if/then*, *therefore*, *likewise*, *but*, *because*, or *in the same way*? Draw an arrow to connect a concluding thought to its beginning argument.
- Is an idea confusing? Write your question in the margin to address at a later time.

Interpretation: **What does it mean?**

- Look up ***Cross-References*** and note similarities and differences
- ***Paraphrasing*** is just writing a verse or passage in our own words to help us wrestle with its meaning.
- After investing the effort to understand what the text says and means on your own, you are now ready to consider what others have to say in your ***Study Bible Notes*** and in more in-depth ***commentaries***.

Application: **How should it change me?**

- View of **God**: What does this passage teach me about God?
- View of **Self**: How does this aspect of God's character change my view of self?
- **Response**: What should I do in response?

Study with Patience

Resolve not to hurry (learning requires work!); set a realistic expectation for your pace of study, focusing on the long term

Study with Prayer

Changes our study from the pursuit of knowledge to the pursuit of God Himself.

Bonus P: Study with other People

- Studying **together** helps keep you moving forward and guard you against derailing into interpretations and applications that may not honor the text.
- Studying in **community** become a vehicle for discussion, confession, repentance, encouragement, and mutual edification.

Women of the Word: Conclusion

*You have said, "Seek my face."
My heart says to You, "Your face, LORD, do I seek." Psalm 27:8*

We Become What We Behold

We become what we behold. But know this: we will not imitate Him by accident. We will not wake up ten years from not and find we have passively taken on the character of God. Our love for God will increase as we learn to study His Word.

Active Imitation

Ephesians 5:1 "Be imitators of God, as dearly loved children."

- With every **purposeful** effort,
- with every **perspective**-laced reading,
- with every **patient** step forward,
- with each **process**-ordered attempt,
- with every **prayer**-infused interlude in the pages of Scripture,
- we move closer to seeing God for who He truly is.

2 Corinthians 3:18 "Beholding the glory of the Lord, [we are] transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another."

Two possibilities in this life:

- Be conformed to the **image of God**
- or
- Be conformed to the **pattern of this world**

*We must make a study of God: what He loves, what He hates, how He speaks and act.
We cannot imitate a God whose features and habits we have never learned.
We must make a study of Him if we want to become like Him.
We must seek His face.*

Chapter 8 and the Conclusion: Questions for Reflection

1. The comprehension phase will take a lot of time. How will you combat your frustration/impatience at this stage? Which method in the comprehension process do you think will be most enjoyable or rewarding? Which will test your patience the most?
2. What other types of application, besides God-centered application, do we tend to jump to? Why do we need to start with God-centered applications?
3. What are some benefits of sharing your study with a group? Which one appeal to you the most? Which do you need the most?
4. Describe a time when you tried to imitate someone else. What was it about that person that made you want to imitate her? How good were you at imitating her?
5. How have you found the principle “We become what we behold” to be true in your own life, in both positive and negative ways?
6. What three things do you most want to remember and put into practice after reading this book?