

# Planted



a study for well-watered women



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by Gretchen Saffles and Kara Holmes

## dear friend,

I recently stepped into a new season of life as a momma to our firstborn son. Nothing could have prepared me for the extreme joy and utter exhaustion that would collide in my new day-to-day routine. The first few weeks quickly turned into one of the driest spiritual seasons of my life. The nights and days began to run together and my typical schedule was interrupted. Prior to giving birth to my son, I would rise early in the morning to spend time with Jesus. Rising early lost its luster when I was waking up every few hours of the night. Coffee never seemed to do the trick to wake me up anymore! Everything within me longed to steal a few quiet moments to spend with the Lord. I realized that being a wife and a momma are two full-time jobs. My soul felt, in many ways, that it was in a desert. Dry. Parched. I was longing for the flowing water from the Well of God's Word, but was unable to make it there each day like I used to. I began to question if I would ever be spiritually fruitful again.

In Isaiah 58, the prophet Isaiah addressed the Israelites, who were mistakenly following the law instead of the Lord. They were fasting and worshipping in a self-centered way and were left dry spiritually. Isaiah not only warned the people of their wayward hearts, but he also showed them how to live in a way that honored God. After describing what "true fasting" looks like, he gave them this promise:

*"And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail." (v. 11)*

When we obey the Lord and dig our roots deep in the Word, letting Scripture remake our attitudes and actions, He waters us and makes us grow. He strengthens our weak bones. He satisfies our desert hearts. He guides us always. We must not miss that this beautiful promise doesn't just happen. In order for the Israelites to receive this blessing, they first needed to return to their First Love and obey the Lord. The same is true for us.



God's will is not for His people to live in a continuous dry season. The seasons of life come and go, but God remains the same. Just as the Israelites needed a reminder to return to a simple, pure obedience to the Lord, so do we need that same reminder. I don't want to live in a dry place, running after fruitless religion and missing Jesus in the process. I also don't want to give up on having an intimate relationship with my Savior during the busy seasons of life. I want to be a well-watered woman, daily feasting on God's goodness, and living in the joy of obedience.

My guess is you know exactly how it feels to be in a dry season where your bones feel weak, your days seem long, and your time seems limited. You open the Bible and don't know what to read, and you have a hard time eliminating noise to listen to His still, small voice. Take heart, because God also speaks in the chaos. The dry seasons of life may not be for growth, but for pruning, for replanting, and for watering. Just as a gardener first plants a seed beneath the earth, then waters it and waits patiently for it to produce fruit, so does God plant us in His truth and water us to produce the fruit of the Spirit. This fruit doesn't come overnight. It comes through waiting, working, and yielding to His gardening hands.

As well-watered women, we must plant ourselves in the Lord and be disciplined to know Him—no matter the season of life. Even when it feels like it hasn't rained and your soul is getting dry, the disciplines of your spiritual walk will continue to produce fruit and a lasting joy. I don't want to waste my dry seasons or neglect my fruitful ones. I want to live as a well-watered woman, planted by the streams of God, growing into the likeness of Christ.

Our prayer is that this study will plant seeds of truth in your heart that cause you to flourish, no matter the season of life you are in. We were created to be well-watered women who find all our satisfaction and joy in Christ alone. Let's plant ourselves in the Gospel by God's rivers of grace and let it grow us into women who proclaim His glory every day of our lives—even in the driest of seasons.

*planted by streams of living water, Gretchen Saffers*



WE'D LOVE TO SEE WHAT YOU ARE LEARNING!  
TAG US @WELLWATEREDWOMEN AND @WELLWATEREDCO  
AND USE THE HASHTAG #WWWPLANTED



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## how to use this study

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*Each week begins with an explanation of one of the above spiritual disciplines. This twelve-week study is designed for you to learn about one discipline at the beginning of each week, and then spend the following five days studying the discipline in the Bible. Below is a sample layout of what your week might look like as you study:*

**SUNDAY:** *Read through the introduction to the discipline.*


**MONDAY-FRIDAY:** *Study the passages given and answer the questions provided.*

**SATURDAY:** *Spend time praying and journaling and asking God how you can follow Him in obedience to the spiritual discipline you have studied that week. You can also find additional resources and a leader guide at [wellwateredwomen.com/planted](http://wellwateredwomen.com/planted).*

*This study is not intended to be a burden. Instead, these disciplines should bring freedom and joy to your life as you follow Jesus and plant your life in the Word of God!*

What kind of season of life are you currently in? In order for the Lord to plant your life by the streams of living water, you must first dig up the soil of your heart. Take time to write down where your heart is and ask the Lord to water you and produce fruit for His glory. Write a prayer below before beginning your study:





**bible study:** *[bahy-buhl stuhd-ee]*

1. Digging into the treasure chest of promises in the Bible.
2. Hungering for the satisfying truth of Scripture.
3. Drinking deep from the Well of God's Word.



# bible study

## week one

Studying the Bible is the bread and water of our existence. In order to know the Lord intimately, we must set aside time each day to bask in His presence, digest His Word, and preach the Gospel to ourselves. At its core, Bible study is about knowing God. Hebrews 4:12 tells us, "The word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart." No other text in the history of mankind has the same living, breathing, piercing attributes that the Word of God does. The words on each page are not merely ink on paper; they are life-changing, soul-perceiving, and heart-cleansing. Every verse is inspired by God and breathed out by the same breath that filled Adam's lungs with life in the garden of Eden (2 Tim. 3:16; Gen. 2:7). The breath of God that initially gave man mortal life gives us eternal life through the infallible Word of God (Is. 55:10-11).

Given the beauty, power, and mystery of the Bible, one might wonder why we would ever not read it. Every day our minds are filled with words from the media, television, office, home, books, and our phones. We are word consumers. One problem we face is that our "spiritual stomachs" become full of the things of this world, leaving little room for hungering after the satisfying things of God. Filling up on worldly words is like eating cotton candy for dinner. It leaves us feeling sick and unsatisfied. However, when we retrain ourselves to crave the things of God, to daily eat of the "bread of life," and to drink from the "living water," we are filled up and satisfied (John 6:35). The Word of God both satisfies our souls and stirs a holy discontentment for more of Jesus.

Studying the Bible can seem like a daunting task if we come unprepared. Just like any other study in life, we have to work at it. R.C. Sproul points out our heart issue in his quote: "We fail in our duty to study God's Word not so much because it is difficult to understand, not so much because it is dull and boring, but because it is work. Our problem is not a lack of intelligence or a lack of passion. Our problem is that we are lazy."<sup>3</sup> Every time I read that quote my pride hurts a little. Laziness truly is at the core of why we don't spend adequate time in the Word. There are so many things that daily call out for our attention, but there is only one thing that will last forever. Social media will fade away eventually, but the Bible never will. We must come to the Word of God hungry every single day for His truth. Jesus promised that those who "hunger and thirst for righteousness...shall be satisfied" (Matthew 5:6).

We must be students of the Word. The Bible is the textbook, the Holy Spirit is our teacher, and the subject is Jesus Christ. There is no other study on earth that will change your life. Jesus gives us an amazing promise in John 6:35: "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." Notice those absolutes? He promises that those who come to Him will not hunger and those who believe in Him will never thirst. Scripture is full of absolutes! God doesn't do things halfway like we do. He doesn't make half-hearted promises, and He never lies (Num. 23:19). What He says is definite and perfect. Therefore, we can read these words of Jesus knowing that when we come to Him, He fully satisfies. However, His promises don't end there. In verses 55-57 of John 6 He explains even further, "For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me."



Feed on Jesus' flesh? Drink Jesus' blood? Jesus isn't talking literally here. He is referring to a spiritual feeding and drinking for our souls that is eternal. We must believe that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died on the cross, rose from the grave, and that the blood He shed was the final sacrifice that made atonement for you and me. We must feed our souls each day on the Word of God so that we know Jesus. He is the source of life, hope, and peace. Jesus is at the center of every word of the Bible.

The Bible reveals to us our need for redemption. It is composed of 66 books that are divided into the Old Testament and the New Testament. However, the Old Testament and the New Testament are not two separate stories. Rather, they are beautifully connected as one great narrative to reveal our depravity and sinful nature, as well as our need for a perfect Savior. The Old Testament points to the New Testament, and the New Testament points to the Old Testament. Dan Brendsel said, "Scripture is not just a collection of energy packets; it's a five-course meal. It's not just a bunch of pearls on a string; it's a chain strong enough to pull you out of any trial."<sup>4</sup> This is how we are to read Scripture. Instead of reading just one pearl at a time, we should read it as a chain in its entirety. Every verse is linked together. The Bible is one story of redemption! We study Scripture because we know we need to be redeemed and we long to know the Redeemer!

God's Word is also useful to our everyday lives. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 tells us, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." The Bible trains us, completes us, corrects us, directs us, and equips us to live the life that God has called us to live. It profits us to study it, learn it, grow in it, and teach it. It benefits our lives both here on earth and in eternity to arrange our days around the commands and promises we find in Scripture. No other books exist to which this kind of usefulness can be attributed. There may be books that encourage and teach practical truths, but no words have been "inspired" other than the words we find in Scripture. Solomon even warns us in Ecclesiastes 12:12-14 of the study of too many books other than the perfect words in the Bible: "My son, beware of anything beyond these. Of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh. The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man."

Our entire duty in life is to "fear God and keep his commandments." We cannot fear Him unless we know Him. We cannot know Him unless we are in His Word. We cannot keep His commandments unless we study them. If you want to live out your duty to God, you must see His Word as being useful to your life! Paul David Tripp said in his book *Instruments in the Hands of the Redeemer* that the Bible is not a "divine self-help book" or an encyclopedia, but "a narrative, a story of redemption, and its chief character is Jesus Christ."<sup>5</sup> The Bible answers our need for lasting change. We need Jesus Christ to save us from the sin that wrecked us! The Bible changes us from the inside out so that we look to Jesus for redemption and not to our own works.

The Bible is a wealth of treasure. The more we dig, the more treasure we find. Let's get our hands messy and dig for the treasure that lasts for eternity! As well-watered women, let us drink of the "living water" that satisfies our souls each day and be filled with what is good lasting: Jesus.

-Gretchen

*week 1 | day 1*

**SCRIPTURE TO STUDY: Psalm 19:7-11**

*dig deep*

**What attributes are given to the Word of God in this passage?**

**What are the benefits mentioned of studying the Bible?**

**What does your soul crave and desire? Ask God to give you a hunger for His true words that bring satisfaction and true life.**

**Pray Psalm 19:12-13:**



*week 1 | day 2*

**SCRIPTURE TO STUDY: Psalm 119:1-11, 72, 103-105**

*dig deep*

**In what way is Bible study demonstrated or taught in this passage?**

**What are practical ways you can incorporate Bible study into your daily life?**

**How are we to seek the Lord through studying the Bible?**

**Pray Psalm 119:72:**



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WOMEN CO.

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WRITTEN BY GRETCHEN SAFFLES AND KARA HOLMES.

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