

Dear Women of the Word,

September 2022

Welcome! I am so thankful that we will be spending the year together studying the books of Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job, and Song of Solomon. We will spend more time in some of these than in others, but all our time in God's word will be time well spent. The books we are studying are known as wisdom literature and the theme of the wisdom writings is— *the fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom*. As we immerse ourselves in this precious portion of Scripture we will begin to see and learn how the fear of the LORD is indeed the beginning of wisdom.

There are a few things you need to know as you begin this study:

We will begin our study in Psalms. Psalms is a book of poems and prayers. Because of the uniquely devotional nature of the Psalms, they need to be taken in and savored in small bites. If you try and do all the lessons for that week in one sitting, you will not be putting yourself in the best position to be fed from God's presence and his word. So, each day in the Psalms study is designed to spend about 15 minutes in one Psalm.

That being said, there are three different ways you can approach this study depending on your time and desire. Included at the beginning of each lesson is an explanation of three different levels of study, with level three being the most in depth.

We are all at different places in our journey with Jesus and in our phases of life. But one thing we all have in common is our need to spend time with God each day. So I want to challenge and encourage you to commit to setting aside at least 15 minutes, five days a week, this Fall session. Pray and ask God to help you make this part of the rhythm of your day. You will never regret time spent with God in his word.

A few other notes to help you navigate the study:

All Scripture quoted is ESV unless otherwise noted. The questions are also based on the ESV unless noted.

The **Digging Deeper** questions take you to a different part of the Bible and will give added understanding to the subject at hand.

 The **Heart** questions require some inner examination and reflection. They help you apply God's word to your own life.

The **Scholar's Notes** and **Picture and Ponder** help to clarify and deepen understanding and application.

For Discussion are questions that are conducive to brainstorming, though you should give them some thought before group time. The answers aren't found directly in the passage but relate to it.

 **Prayer.** Growing in our relationship with God involves two-way conversation. As God speaks to us through his word, he invites us to respond to him through prayer. So, interspersed throughout the study are boxes with arrows pointing up, prompting us to respond to God in praise, thanksgiving, confession, and requests. Make these prayers your own or use them as a reminder to respond to what God is speaking to you. In the Psalms portion of the study, you will be invited to write your own prayers as well.

One last bit of information that will hopefully make life a little easier. If you are absent on a day we hand out lessons, you can go to my website and print off the lesson you need at Inhimallthings.org

Lastly, remember that the aim of our study is not to get every answer perfect, but to think, learn, discuss, and search God's word together, all in order to know and love God better—and to know how much he loves us! If you are new to studying the Bible—great! We are so excited to have you! Your questions are welcome and help us all to grow! Our great God is deep and complex and infinitely wise and good, so we should not be discouraged that studying his word and understanding his ways is sometimes hard; it takes effort, time, and perseverance, but he is so incredibly worth it!

As we study together this year—

May your hearts be encouraged and joined together in love, so that you may have all the riches of assured understanding and have the knowledge of God's mystery— Christ. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Him.

Colossian 2:2-3

Love,

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