Date: April 15, 2023

Opener:

Welcome to the Gathering – Our Women’s Study Group. We are so glad you are here!

I want to thank everyone involved in putting this event together from the decorating, the food preparation, and more. It takes many helping hands to put on an event and we are always blessed with many talented and willing helpers. Thank you so much.

LET’s Review:

As many of you know, we refer to this group as the Gathering because the bible puts emphasis on the need for believers to gather – in person to worship and pray to our Lord and to encourage each other. See Hebrews 10:25 NLT

*(And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near.)*

The purpose of our study group is to explore God’s Plan for His Daughters and how we should respond.

**We are starting a new Series titled: The Time IS Now!**

**Session I** in this new series is titled: **Choose Your Side – the side of the world or the side of God.**

Now you may be thinking, this seems strange that I would begin this teaching in this way. But hear me out.

The first step in our journey as a Christian, a believer and follower of Christ is to confess our belief in Jesus and be saved. Hopefully, all in this room have prayed to receive Christ as their savior, repented of your sins so that you could be forgiven and adopted into the family of God. (If you haven’t or are not sure you are saved – we can settle that today.) However, for all those that have I will say that is just the beginning of your journey as a Christ Follower.

Let’s Pray before we go on:

Dear Heavenly Father we are gathered in your glorious presence to honor you and praise you for who you are. We give thanks for all you are doing in our lives, in our families, our community, our nation and this world. You are an awesome God -- magnificent in power and love for your children. We come before you now with an open heart, and mind to hear from you today. We are in great anticipation of the wisdom and revelation you wish to impart to us during this study. We thank you Holy Spirit for preparing each one of us to become fully equipped and determined to become all our Heavenly Father designed us to be, in Jesus Name.

Lord, I ask that you speak to each woman’s heart here today and give her the willingness to step up and step out to grab onto her purpose with all gusto. Reveal to her that she can be that difference maker wherever her feet tread, in Jesus Name. Lord, take away any fear, give her your peace that surpasses all understanding, and instill in her a steadfast, unshakeable spirit of determination to do whatever you call her to do wherever you call her to go.

And I pray this in the mighty name of Jesus, the name above every name. Amen and Amen.

***The verses chosen for today are:***

# **Hebrews 10:22-23 NLT**

**22**let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ’s blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water.

**23**Let us hold tightly without wavering to the hope we affirm, for God can be trusted to keep his promise.

**1 John 5:4 NLT**

**4**For every child of God defeats this evil world, and we achieve this victory through our faith.

Back to the question of salvation and our belief –

It is more than just saying words to the effect of escaping going to hell, it is a solid belief in the facts in what the Father did for us so that we could be reconciled to Him for all eternity.

So, I ask you to examine your heart, do you REALLY–

1. Believe in the virgin birth?
2. Believe Jesus lived a sinless life while on this earth?
3. Believe that Jesus willingly sacrificed his life at the will of The Father, to die on the cross to pay for ALL our sins – past, present, and future?
4. Believe He conquered death by going to hell in our place, but then rose to life on the third day?
5. Believe that He is alive and is seated at the right hand of the Father?
6. Believe that because of the blood he shed on the cross, that those that confess and believe, are washed clean by His blood and are seen as righteous in the Father’s sight? And because of the blood shed for us, we can live free from the power of sin, live free of disease, live abundantly now, through Jesus and the power of His Name. And ultimately we get to spend eternity with our Heavenly Father.

I hope you said yes. Praise the Lord! For this is the foundation, but again I say it is just the beginning of the most amazing journey. We each have been called to greater things for His Kingdom. Amen!

John 16:33 AMPC **33**I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace *and* confidence. In the world you have tribulation *and* trials *and* distress *and* frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]

As Jesus said in Luke 10:19 AMPC **19**Behold! I have given you authority *and* power to trample upon serpents and scorpions, and [physical and mental strength and ability] over all the power that the enemy [possesses]; and nothing shall in any way harm you.

So, the question stands – Are you really standing with God or are you standing with the world system? Have you been riding the fence? Just trying to get along, choosing not to ruffle any feathers, or worse yet, do anything that could possibly cost you friendships, or cause you to lose financially by being vocal about your faith?

It is not always easy or comfortable living your faith – out loud. However, even more uncomfortable is being unfaithful - disobedient to our Heavenly Father.

Jesus says in Matthew 6:24 NLT **24**“No one can serve two masters. For you will hate one and love the other; you will be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and be enslaved to money.

While the second part of this scripture references money – it can also apply to any thing or person that we put before God.

Jesus also warns us that we must make a choice – we either believe in God, in what he says in his word and be willing to defend it or we don’t – which is choosing the world. We cannot be lukewarm in our faith, like the church of Laodicea in Revelation, lest we risk being spewed out – considered virtually worthless for the kingdom. See Revelation 3:14-16.

Times are changing! God has begun shaking things up – shaking anything that can be shaken to awaken His Church to see how bad, corrupt things have become because His Church has allowed the enemy to infiltrate every area of our lives.

It has been a slow process taking many years, but the enemy has effectively kicked God out of our schools, taken over our financial/business areas, taken God out of our legal system, and our governmental system. The enemy has targeted our families replacing Him with secular gods of pleasure, ambition, greed, and selfishness. And the enemy has even infiltrated some of our churches with false teachers leading many believers and non-believers astray with a perverted version of the Gospel and scriptures.

Well, no more. God is speaking through His prophets and through signs declaring the truths in His Word, exposing the deception, and restoring justice and as well as the Church body in leadership positions to hold back the darkness until we are called home. The Church still has a job to do while we are here. It is not time for the darkness to overtake the world – The Light – God’s light that lives within us is still here and there is a great harvest to complete before we are raptured to join him in the air. A great revival is bubbling up all over the world because of His Glory and His manifest presence filling the earth. Halleluiah!

We are seeing it take place right here in Norman with the student-led event -- Fill The Stadium on April 29th. OU Students working together with the community to put on a concert for the purpose of proclaiming the gospel to as many people as they can fit into that 86,000-seat stadium. This is happening now!

Joel 2:27-28 AMPC **27**And you shall know, understand, *and* realize that I am in the midst of Israel and that I the Lord am your God and there is none else. My people shall never be put to shame. **28**And afterward I will pour out My Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

We too are His people because of the New Covenant! This prophecy is for now!

We are being called to get out of our comfort zone, stand up for the gospel, take action in whatever way God puts on our heart to assist with bringing in the harvest, discipling and supporting the new believers. And, yes pray! This is our most powerful tool.

Think on this:

2 Corinthians 2:14-17 TPT God always makes his grace visible in Christ, who includes us as partners of his endless triumph. Through our yielded lives he spreads the fragrance of the knowledge of God everywhere we go. We have become the unmistakable aroma of the victory of the Anointed One to God —a perfume of life to those being saved and the odor of death to those who are perishing. The unbelievers smell a deadly stench that leads to death, but believers smell the life-giving aroma that leads to abundant life. And who of us can rise to this challenge? For unlike so many, we are not peddlers of God’s Word who water down the message. We are those sent from God with pure motives, who speak in the sight of God from our union with Christ.

A final word for this day and hour.

We are called to be strong in the Lord and through His power we can stand against the enemy – but not only stand but by the mighty power in the name of Jesus and the Holy Spirit that dwells within us – we are overcomers, triumphant to the very end!

Ephesians 6: 10 NLT **10**A final word: Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. **11**Put on all of God’s armor so that you will be able to stand firm against all strategies of the devil.

1 John: 5:5 AMPC **5**Who is it that is victorious over [that conquers] the world but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God [who adheres to, trusts in, and relies on that fact]?

1 John 4:4 AMPC **4**Little children, you are of God [you belong to Him] and have [already] defeated *and* overcome them [the agents of the antichrist], because He Who lives in you is greater (mightier) than he who is in the world.

Make this your confession, your declaration today – I believe and confess that I believe in Jesus, I believe that Jesus lives, that Jesus saves, and He is my savior. I put all my faith and trust in His Word, and I choose to follow wherever He leads. I choose this day to passionately pursue my calling to reach the lost and care for his God’s people through any means He makes possible. I will diligently listen for His voice and heed his instruction, by the power in the name of Jesus.

Praise the Lord!!