
EVENTS NEWSLETTER

HEAR. EXPECT. ACT. REST. TRUST (H.E.A.R.T.)

Welcome to WoW², Women of Worship, Women of Witness. This newsletter captures special events we participate in outside of our normal meetings. Some events happen with other small groups, and/or other people, but some do not. This event was an all-day WoW² retreat where we gathered for special teachings related to the title. This newsletter will not capture everything, especially those things that were not in my original notes, and the topics may not be in the exact order discussed; however, it is intended to capture key points from our time together, with similar topics being grouped together for convenience. We hope you are blessed as you join us on our journey.

EVENT TYPE: Retreat

EVENT DATE: September 19, 2021

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR RETREAT:

- The theme for this conference was “Grace like a Flood. Our retreat Scriptures were Psalm 139:14 (NLT) and Thessalonians 5:23 (AMP). As part of the teaching, attendees received an **Amazing Grace Journal**,¹ **Myrrh Anointing and Prayer Oil**,² a **Spiritual Gifts Assessment**,³ and an **Experiencing God’s Grace booklet**. Unfortunately, the booklets were part of a going out of business sale, so there’s no reference. In addition, I had received a free journal with one of my purchases that I gave to the first person to inquire about it, for sometimes we have not because we ask not!
- **The messages.** “Grace Like a Flood,” and “Reflections at Rosh Hashanah.”

Grace Like a Flood. This portion of our day began with an opening prayer, followed by the blowing of the shofar.⁴ Next, one of our guests performed a worship dance to “With Lifted Hands,” by Ryan Stevenson.

¹ Purchased from: https://www.christianbook.com/apps/checkout/payment_info.

² Purchased from <https://store.museumofthebible.org/myrrh-anointing-and-prayer-oil-1-4-oz/>.

³ Purchased from https://store.johnmaxwell.com/Spiritual-Gift-Test--Dan-Reiland_p_731.html.

⁴ “Shofar Blowing – Sound with Pictures,” Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/9ht0ailWQf8>

- **Significance of our meeting day.** This retreat was supposed to happen near Passover, but since we were in the throes of a global pandemic, we met on Rosh Hashanah instead. Rosh Hashanah is the head of the new year on the Hebrew calendar, and it's a celebration of when Jewish people believe God created mankind. The Feast of Trumpets also falls on this day (hence the blowing of the shofar). This day also begins a 10-day period that ends with the Day of Atonement, which is when the high priest would go into the Temple and make sacrifices so God would forgive the people of their sins. As disciples of Christ, the Feast of Trumpets is our reminder to always look for His return! However, the question arose, do we even think about Christ's return enough, which left us with something to ponder.
- **Why we have access to the throne of grace.** Thankfully, we no longer must have a priest make sacrifices for us, because Jesus is now our Lamb of God. When He went to the Cross on our behalf, He atoned for our sins once and for all; He also made it possible for us to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Moreover, we can expect Him to meet us there!
- **Our hope for the day.** Because we were spending the day looking at our heart through the acronym H.E.A.R.T (Hear. Expect. Act. Rest. Trust) and it was a Jewish celebration of when God created mankind, the day felt somewhat prophetic. The hope was that by the time we left, we'd be equipped for the Holy Spirit to create something new in our lives that brings glory, honor, and praise to the name of Jesus.
- **The throne of grace.** In thinking about the throne of grace, it seemed prudent to identify what the mercy and the grace we receive are for and what each of them look like. Mercy was defined as "compassion," which is "kindness of good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them".⁵ Thus, mercy is what we extend to others. Grace, on the other hand, is so much more than God's unmerited favor. It's also defined as God's "divine influence upon [our] heart and its reflection in [our] life."⁶ This is important, because we're not only at God's throne to obtain mercy for others, but we're also there to obtain grace to help us surrender anything and everything in our heart that is not of Him and that does not look like His Son, Jesus,

⁵ Strong's Bible App, Thayer's G1656

⁶ Strong's Bible App, Thayer's G5485

operating in our lives, because anything we haven't surrendered impacts how we **hear** from the Lord, what our **expectations** are based on what we heard, how we **act** in response to what we heard, whether or not we can **rest** in what we heard, and whether or not we will **trust** God to fulfill what we heard!

- **Fearfully and wonderfully made.** Psalm 139:14 tells to thank God for making us so wonderfully complex! We're taught His workmanship is marvelous, and how well we know it. From birth to death or when Jesus returns, whichever comes first, we are on a journey, which consists of both good and bad times that help shape us into the people we become and how we respond to life's circumstances. That sounds simple, but it took me a long time to truly understand this concept of how life shapes us, so I shared it with others, because sometimes, it's the simplest things in life that are so easy to overlook. As a result, we end up struggling through something merely because we're missing that one piece of the puzzle that puts everything into perspective!
- **God's hands are wet.** While living in Oklahoma, I had a dream where I was singing this song, but to this day, all I remember is "When I cry my tears and turn my back, God's hands are wet, but when I cry my tears and lift my voice, God picks me up. This dream was relevant during that time of my life because I wasn't where I wanted to be. It was the first time I had ever experienced "No" from God. It's also when I learned God doesn't always answer our prayers with a "Yes." And even though I had this dream in a difficult season of my life, I always felt like something was missing. When I was preparing for this retreat, I learned that missing "something" is found in the many times when we go through a trial, cry our tears, and then turn our back to God, leaving Him standing there with our tears dripping from His hands. For instance, how often does our hurt, our pain, our frustrations, or our struggles leave us unable or unwilling to lift our hands to our Heavenly Father for Him to pick us up, because He will, you know. However, we have to be willing to surrender. And, the beautiful thing is, when we lift our hands in surrender, it's a short distance from lifting heads to praising God even amid the storm! So, finally, with this retreat, I learned, and was able to share, that the lifting of our hands in surrender is the missing piece between our crying our tears and leaving Abba with wet hands, and our crying our tears and Abba, Father, picking us up! To cap this teaching off, I shared the example of a young child sitting on the floor crying, because she's not getting her way, and the parent comes over to pick her up.

But, because the child wants what she wants, she struggles and fights back as a way of saying, “I’m not giving in to you!” In our trials, God is much like the parent that leaves the child there crying until she wears herself out. But, when we act in faith and lift our hands and our heart in praise and worship to Him, indicating we are surrendering our will to Him, THEN God can pick us up and set us in His lap. Otherwise, He’s trying to pick up a child who’s fighting back and will continue to climb down to do things her way!

- **Missing ingredient in my faith.** The revelation of what was missing from my song helped me discover what had been missing from my faith walk, and that something is grace! This revelation started when I woke up one morning with “Love is the vehicle that carries God’s grace, and grace is the connection between the head and the body.” This revelation answered the all-important question of how to do something—a question I have asked myself and been asked many times! The answer God gave me was H.O.W - Healing. Overcomes. Wounds.
- **H.O.W.** When it comes to healing the wounds in our heart, the only way I’ve found for that to happen is when what’s in my head gets connected to what’s in my heart to create a lasting change in my perspective and in my life, because the direction I’m facing—what I’m looking at—will determine the seeds being sown in my heart! Our physical body is the perfect example. Our neck is the physical bridge between our head and our body, and it’s our neck that gives our head the ability to turn this way or that. Spiritually, God’s grace is the connection between our mind and heart! It’s His grace that gives us the ability to shift our spiritual eyes this way or that! It’s His grace we need to plug into when life is hard, and He feels so very far away. It’s in those times when we need His grace to help us raise our hands in surrender to Him. Or, as James 4:7-8 tells us, “Submit to God,” for it’s in our submission that we are able to resist the devil so he will flee from us. After all, God knows us, and He knows how “wonderfully complex” He made us, which means He knows exactly what we need to do to be able to bridge that gap between what we know and what we do! And that’s the space where His grace, and only His grace can make a difference. Nothing anyone else says or does can fill that gap, because only God knows how He created us, and only He knows exactly what has happened to shape us into who we have become.

- **Walking in His grace.** We truly need God's grace to give Him the things "yet to come and the things in the past," which was a line from "With Lifted Hands."⁷ We especially need His grace to even know when we're sinning, because Proverbs teaches us there is a way that seems right to a man, but the end thereof is death (14:12, 16:25). That's why it's important and why I encourage people to know what Scripture they are standing on with any decision they make, because if we're standing on God's Word, we're standing on solid ground, and we can trust Him to do what only He can do, which is to give us the peace that surpasses all understanding when life around us turns upside down!
- **Impact of our emotions.** It's when life looks raggedy that we're more inclined to make decisions based on emotion than on what Scripture reveals or what the Lord has spoken to us. Maybe knowing how easy it is for emotion to rule my decisions is why the thought that I need God's grace to know when I'm sinning struck a chord with me, because it reminded me that life leaves us with scars. We get wounded as we're growing up, and those wounds create areas of access in our heart for the enemy of our soul to torment us. But what I didn't understand until this retreat was that it's not just the wounds that give the devil access. It's also all the things we perceived as good that became points of comparison in our life by which we judge others. It's these wounds and points of comparison that help to shape our personality. And our personality is one of the very things we should submit to the Lord whenever we're at the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in our time of need.
- **Gifts and talents.** The Father gives us gifts and talents, but the enemy of our soul attacks those gifts and talents to keep us from operating in the fullness of who we are created to be. One of the ways he does this is to use past events and fears about the future against us to warp our personality, so it's shaped towards the things of the world. Because the devil knows our personality and every quirk we picked up from our parents and those around us, he can use those things to manipulate us in ways we may not even understand. As a result, I shared how a personality test can help us identify our natural strengths and weaknesses, because knowing our strengths and weaknesses can also help us in our spiritual life. I also shared how we don't need to

⁷ The full lyrics can be found at <https://www.google.com/search?q=with+lifted+hands+lyrics&og=with+lifted+hands+ly&aqs=chrome.0.0j69i57j0i22i30l7.5375i0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>.

follow Jesus to access what was given to us naturally, but if we don't submit our weaknesses to the refining fire of Christ's love for us, those weaknesses can become a lid over our lives to hinder, if not stop, the flow of God's grace to us and through us. Moreover, as Christ followers, when we got saved and the Holy Spirit came to dwell in us, we can now combine the spiritual gifts He gives us with our natural gifts and talents, especially since how we're naturally gifted and talented can, and for some does, align, with God's specific purposes for our lives. Thus, if you know HOW you were created, it might help you to know WHY you were created! So, I passed out a gift assessment test from John Maxwell.⁸ I went on to share how my gifts and talents that were once used for worldly pleasure are now being used to serve the Lord.

- **God's creations.** Each of us is equipped for something special that will help others. During retreat we were blessed by the gift of dance. So, when we think of our Heavenly Father as our Creator, how can we not think about how He took the time to masterfully create mankind! That's an amazing concept to grasp! Not only are we created in His image, but He also knew which two people it would take to bring His image of us into the earth, full of all the natural gifts and talents we could one day submit to Him once we've confessed His Son as Lord and Savior of our lives and believed in our heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. With our confession, all the gifts and talents God gave us became a part of His kingdom—His family of believers, who are our brothers, and sisters in Christ. Not only that, but by His grace, He infused those gifts and talents with the power of His Holy Spirit by releasing spiritual gifts within us. These gifts vary, but every believer in the body of Christ has one of more of these: words of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working of miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, different tongues, interpretation of tongues, ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, and mercy.⁹ Moreover, Jesus gave His Body apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to equip us for the ministry of reconciliation He has given those who call Him Lord and Savior. Lastly, when we don't know how we're gifted, it's harder to live a fruitful life, and it's easy to not be on the path God intended for us. For, if we're on the wrong path, it's all too easy to spend our time looking for

⁸ Reiland, Dr Dan. *Spiritual Gifts: A Tool to Discover Your Place in Ministry*. INJOY Inc, 1998. (Can be purchased from https://store.johnmaxwell.com/Spiritual-Gift-Test--Dan-Reiland_p_731.html).

⁹ 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

purpose instead of having an eternal mindset and looking for the return of Jesus, which took us to our next Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 5:23.

- **1 Thessalonians 5:23.** I read this verse from the Amplified version, which points out that we are to be set apart and looking for the return of Jesus. I also highlighted how this verse addresses our spirit, our **soul**, and our body, for our soul contains all the treasures we've stored up in our heart, regardless of their value. I used the analogy of the "Little Mermaid,"¹⁰ and how Ariel collected useless treasures, simply because they came from the world that she wanted so desperately to be a part of. I also highlighted how she would take those treasures to Scuttle who would fill her head with a bunch of lies about this wonderful treasure, which is akin to what the devil does to us! He tells us this "thing" in our heart we're holding onto is some kind of wonderful treasure, when in truth, it's not. It's really something that's sucking the life out of us and causing us to not be able to **rest** in the truth of God's Word and to not **trust** Him with our life. And, rather than wanting God more than anything else, we end up wanting things more than we want Him. The good news, though, is that even when life isn't as we desire it to be, the Holy Spirit can take anything we submit to Him and turn it into a teaching lesson, even the COVID-19 safety measures we had to implement.
- **Lessons learned from COVID-19 Precautions.**
 - **Temperature check.** Because fever is a symptom of COVID-19 and a host of other illnesses, I took each person's temperature when she entered. While I was fretting about having to put this and other precautions into place, the Holy Spirit taught me how even the Father doesn't allow us into His house without taking our temperature. In Revelation, He tells the church at Laodicea, "... I could wish you were hot or cold, So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of my mouth" (3:15c-16).
 - **Vision check.** Everyone that came in also had to wear a face shield or a mask to prevent the spread of any airborne particles. For those who chose the face shields, they had to remove the protective film on both sides to see clearly. Interestingly enough, one of the women removed the film from one side, but not

¹⁰ *The Little Mermaid*. Directed by Ron Clements, John Musker, performances by Jodi Benson, Samuel E. Wright, Rene Auberjonois, Walt Disney Feature Animation and Walt Disney Pictures, 1989

both, so her vision was still cloudy! The Holy Spirit used that as a teaching moment, but I don't remember the specific message. What I do know is that in Matthew, Jesus says, "Therefore, I speak to them in parables, because seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not **hear**, nor do they understand (13:13).

- **Clean hands, clean heart.** Last, but not least, before each person could enter the place of **rest** to hear the message, she had to wash her hands. And yes. There was meaning to that as well. James 4:8 teaches us to "Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded."
- **Overall message from COVID precautions.** Despite my dread of having to take all those precautions just to hold the retreat, Abba communicated a message: check the temperature of our heart before Him and ask Him to open our eyes and ears to see, hear, and understand what He is speaking to us. Finally, when we come boldly before His throne of grace, surrender our heart to Him, so through His grace, His divine influence upon our heart, He can open our eyes to anything we need to repent for, so we can receive the mercy we need to be able to extend it to others, and so the work of our hands will be full of humility rather than pride, ungodly judgment, and boastfulness about tomorrow, because we truly do not what tomorrow holds.
- **Daily devotional.** I took time to share an excerpt from a daily devotional I captured a while ago related to 2 Peter 3:4-16. Unfortunately, I don't know what I did with the full excerpt, but I did share that the Scripture in it said, "Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things {God's promises and His return}, be diligent to be found in peace" (AMP), but as the commentary pointed out, "You cannot be at peace with God without receiving His grace."
- **Takeaway Items.** I'm not sure when I gave out the journal and the anointing oil, but I explained the journal is a different kind of journal to help them reflect on God's amazing grace. With the anointing oil, I suggested that the next time they go before the throne of grace to obtain the mercy they need for others and the grace they need for themselves, that might be a good time to anoint themselves with oil as a reminder that He has given us the "oil of joy for mourning," and "The garment of praise for the spirit of

heaviness; that [they and I] may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified” (Isaiah 61:3).

- **The program.** I ended this portion of the day by encouraging them to take time to study the picture on the back of their program (attachment 1) when they’re in their quiet time with God, so they can act upon what it says to find that place of peace that only comes when His grace, His divine influence on their heart is freely flowing to them and through them. By heeding what the picture reveals, we can walk in the confidence, guidance, peace, love, and joy that comes when we’re plugged into Jesus. If anything in this picture is missing, we can take a moment to ask Him to show us how we’re unplugged! We can also ask Him what’s going on in our heart that has disturbed our ability to REST in Him and to TRUST the journey we’re on! And to help us get started with praising God even in the storm, we closed out the first half of retreat with the song, “In the Sanctuary”¹¹ as we prepared to eat lunch!

Reflections at Rosh Hashanah (H.E.A.R.T). This portion of our day began with a worship dance to “More than Anything,” by Natalie Grant. Since “Rosh Hashanah is a time of reflection and expectation,”¹² we spent this time on a guided reflection (attachment 2).¹³ We then concluded our retreat time with Takeaway, which was a time for us to share our reflections. Since the reflections were personal to those there, I did not capture them; however, I encourage everyone reading these Notes to take a moment for your own personal reflection even if it’s not Rosh Hashanah!

Closing: We ended our day with communion and prayer.

If you have questions, comments, or concerns about information contained in this document, or would like to be added to or removed from the email distribution for the meeting notes, please email us at wow2@wow2women.com or complete a Contact Form on our site www.wow2women.com.

¹¹ Kurt Carr, “In the Sanctuary”, Retrieved from <https://youtu.be/-RNzmwnD5gs>.

¹² Jewish Voice International. *Appointments with God: Reflections on the Jewish Feasts*. JVMI Publishing, 2018.

ATTACHMENT 1: Back of Program¹⁴



¹⁴ "Feeling Unplugged." *Healing Streams*, <https://www.healingstreamsusa.org/feeling-unplugged>

In the last 12 months, how have you grown spiritually? Are you more patient, positive or has your trust in God increased? Thank Him for those areas of growth.

What about the ways you've disappointed yourself or others? Take those to Him as well, and receive His forgiveness as you stand on the biblical truth that God knows your every weakness, loves you completely and truly delights in you as His child.

How would you like to grow in the year ahead? Consider any negative habits you'd like to break or new positive ones you want to form. You may have specific goals such as pursuing a volunteer opportunity sharing your testimony with others, talking about Jesus with someone you know, or learning a new skill.

Ask God what He wants to teach you in the next 12 months. Ask Him to speak to you through His unchanging word and His Spirit

And then listen.

(Jewish Voice International. Appointments with God: Reflections on the Jewish Feasts. JVMI Publishing, 2018, pp. 90-91)

Reflections at Rosh Hashanah

*Hear (the Word of the Lord/
 Hear His truth*

Psalms 33:4, John 8:31-32

*Expect (that His Word saves,
 heals, and delivers us from
 our destruction)*

Psalms 107:20

*Act (upon the truth you
 understand)*

James 4:17

*Rest (in His love and in His
 grace)*

Matthew 11:28

*Trust (Him in and through
 all things)*

Romans 8:28, Proverbs 3:5-7