



Meeting Notes: Perspective (April 1, 2015)

These notes capture our April 1, 2015 meeting. We opened our meeting in prayer and then began our evening. Topic notes may not be in the order discussed during group, and they are not intended to cover everything discussed. They are intended as highlights to capture the essence of our evening. General notes follow each topic that was discussed. Documents used or created during this meeting are attached.

GOD'S GOAL for the Group: Learn how to apply God's Word to our lives.

CURRENT VISION: "2015 - Passing the Test from the Inside Out." Scripture Reference: **Psalm 51:10**, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me" (NKJV).

Discussion Topic: Perspective

- **Memory Verse: Psalm 90:12**, "So teach *us* to number our days, That we may gain a heart of wisdom."
- **The White Board:** We began the night with the single word, "Perspective" written at the top of the board. I then asked the following questions, along with any other pertinent questions that arose:
 - What do you see on the board?
 - What **can** you relate to on the board?
 - What **can't** you relate to on the board?
 - Do you recognize your trials?
 - What do you understand about spiritual warfare?
 - What is your perspective of the armor?
 - How do you relate to living by vision?
 - How do you relate to the group vision?
- **Discussion:** It was interesting to see how every person took a completely different approach to answering the first question, which helped me see how uniquely we each perceive things! As we went down the questions, I asked other questions as needed to clarify or dig deeper as I felt led. **Takeaway.** This exercise helped me understand the importance of meeting people where they are rather than trying to make them fit in my box. This allows the Holy Spirit to create

in their life what they need to mature spiritually and pass the test of THEIR faith from the inside out!

- **Other nuggets from the White Board Discussion:** During our discussion, we touched on one of my favorite verses: “In the multitude of words, sin is not lacking” (Proverbs 10:19). As a result, we ended up talking about the times we feel like we just have to get something out. Ultimately, we went back to what was said in an earlier meeting; our anger is like a bomb. Once the words are out, the bomb went boom. We have to learn how to diffuse the bomb without it going boom! If we deal with “why” we want to get something out, we can diffuse the bomb. We then looked at several of our specific “whys:”
 - **Pride.**
 - **Self-pity.**
 - **Not wanting to blow up on someone else.**
 - **Feeling overwhelmed.** We asked the question, “Is there a root we are not aware of?” And, discovered we had varying roots for why we feel overwhelmed. Insecurity was one. Feeling under pressure from having a lot of choices was another.
 - **Under pressure from a lot of choices.** The root of this one was the fear of making the wrong decision.
 - **Insecurity.** We examined how both fear and pride can cause us to be insecure.
 - **Takeaway.** Pride, and fear seemed to be the main roots with insecurity being a kissing cousin!
- **Perspective:** After examining each person’s perspective of the white board, we then asked the question, “Where am I?” We identified three layers of perspective for where our mind can be: in the world, on our cross, or seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. Attachment 1 is the result of our discussion. Here are the nuggets:
 - **The World.** The world is the bottom layer, because that’s where our mind is until we are born again and/or until we renew it. When we are in the world, our focus is the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life (1 John 2:16). Consequently, we are imbedded in our circumstances and all we can see is what’s happening TO us. **Takeaway.** When we are focused on the world, we are focused on self—what we want, think, and feel are all-important.
 - **Our Cross.** When we come to Jesus, He tells us we have to take up our

cross and follow Him (**Matthew 10:38**). Using “Take Up My Cross”¹ as a reference, we looked at the struggle that happens between being on our cross and being in the world, and how that struggle continues until we finally submit our will to God. While the phrase “fire that tries man’s soul” is not explicitly found in Scripture, both 1 Peter 1:7 and 1 Corinthians 3:13-15 allude to this fire. Thus, we looked at how we go from the flames of our circumstances to our Cross and back again, until we finally decide to repent for holding onto our will and we choose God’s will, allowing our will to become consumed in the fire of our circumstances. Through repentance, we go from being self-centered in our thinking to God-centered. **Takeaway.** Until we die to our selfish nature, we will continue to struggle with doing God’s will for our lives.

- **Seated in Heavenly Places with Christ Jesus.** Once we submit our will to God, our spirit AND our mind are now seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus, as we no longer seek to do our will, but we seek to have the mind of Christ and do the Father’s will, just like Christ did. We have learned how to trust in Christ Jesus. We know our work is to believe in Jesus and choose to do God’s will, so the Holy Spirit can do the work in our lives that leads to transformation and a clean heart. **Takeaway.** We can renew our mind, but only the Holy Spirit can clean up our heart!
- **Head Knowledge to Heart Knowledge:** During our discussion, not everyone was sure how to get what’s in our head to being in our heart. Attachment 2 captures that discussion. Here are the nuggets:
 - **Perspective.** When we know who we are in Christ, we can more easily yield our will to Him. We yield our will by believing God’s Word is true and then doing what it says do, i.e. walking it out. The more we do what God says do, the easier it becomes until we cease struggling against what God said, and what was once only in our mind is now in our heart as well. **Takeaway.** Doing what we know to do is how we go from head knowledge to heart knowledge.
 - **Judging.** We talked about how we judge other people, and that judgment belongs to the Lord and only to the Lord.
 - **Clean heart.** We read our memory verse (Psalm 46:10) and looked at two things: who creates the clean heart in us and how. God creates the clean heart in us through the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
 - **Name that Arrow (NTA).** Using NTA helps us identify the arrow that creates the “why” behind our ungodly responses. Knowing the arrow helps us to focus.

¹ The document, “Take Up My Cross” (Apr 24, 2013) can be located under Group Documents on the documents page of the website: <http://www.wow2women.com/documents.html>.

- **Forgiveness.** Forgiveness is debt free, which means they don't owe us anything, including an apology.

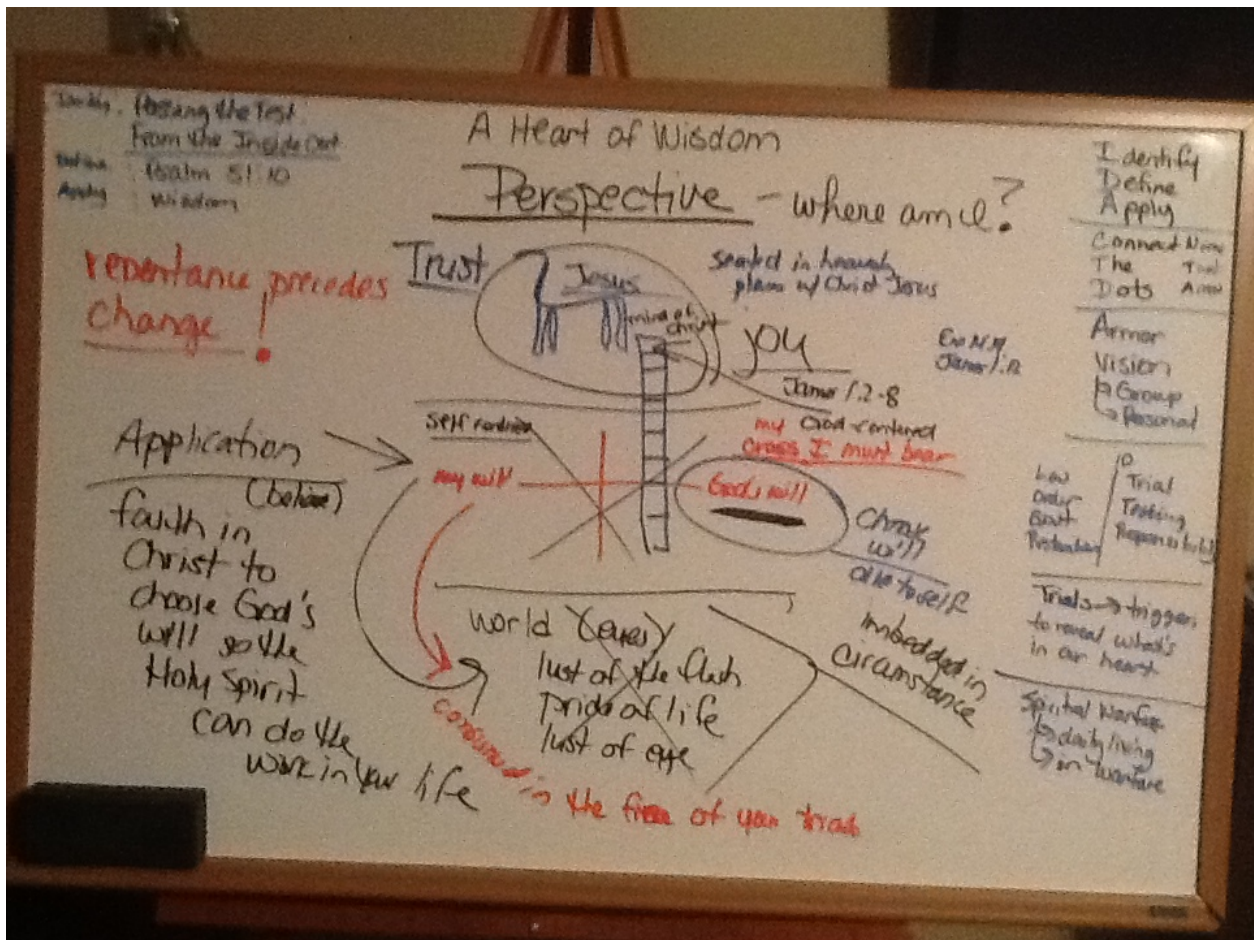
Homework. Everyone is encouraged to have an honest moment with the Lord, asking the Holy Spirit to show us ourselves. Below are a few questions we can ask, but no matter what questions we use, the main thing is to be honest with the Holy Spirit and allow Him to do the work in our heart that needs to be done.

- Where is my mind?
- If my mind is in the world or on my cross, what is holding me there?
- Do I know who I am in Christ?

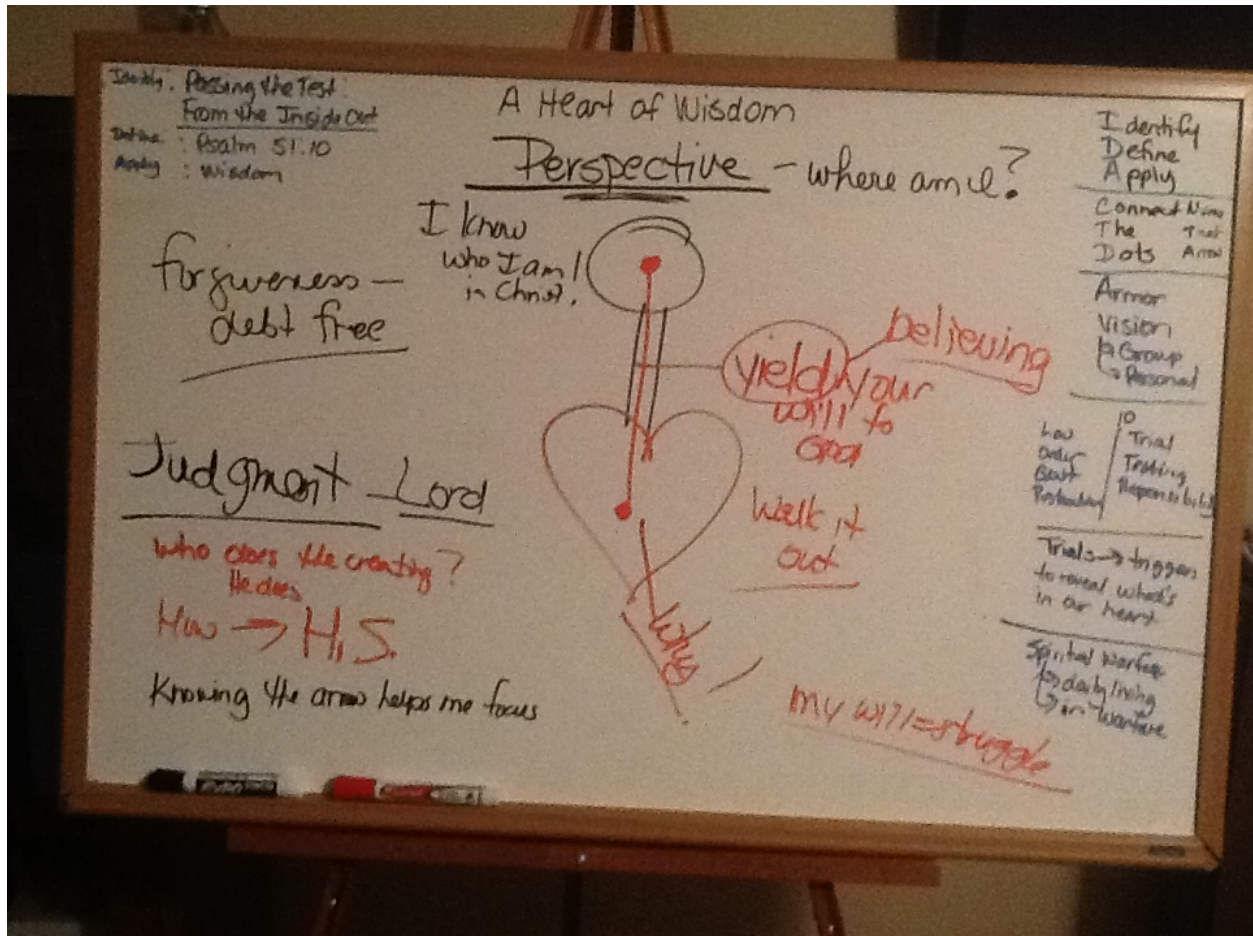
Closing: We closed our meeting in prayer with a time of need-specific prayer for the challenges that were lifted up, for the group overall, and as the Holy Spirit led.

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ATTACHMENT 1: Whiteboard



ATTACHMENT 2: White Board





ATTACHMENT 3: TAKE UP MY CROSS

You are faced with a decision. You are having a Cross experience. Your body is the stake; the choice you must make is the Cross. God's will is on the right side of the Cross; your will is on the left side of the Cross. The fire that tries man's soul burns beneath you. Your spirit reaches with one hand and grabs God's will. Your soul reaches with the other hand and grabs your will. As you hang above the fire, you find yourself having a hard time holding onto both ends. Your muscles begin to burn from the pain. The suffering begins. You are not willing to let go with either hand, so the pain intensifies. How do you make it stop? You release the grip of one hand.

You choose to hold onto your will. God's will is still there attached to the Cross. Wait. What else do you see? There is a slide that goes down into the flames. You get on and travel to the bottom. The fire begins to consume you. Your flesh begins to burn. The pain increases. You can stand it no longer. You must escape this suffering. You search and search, but there is no way out. You look up. You see a rope. You grab hold and climb back onto the Cross seeking some relief from your circumstances. You continue to do this, time and time again, thinking, sooner or later you will find the path out. It never happens. Each time, your strength fades. One day, you decide you must make a different choice.

You are back on the Cross. You let go of your will to choose God's will. Your will falls to the ground and is consumed in the flames. You realize you had to sacrifice it to God in exchange for His will. All of a sudden a ladder appears before you. You place your hands and feet on the ladder. You climb higher and higher, further and further



away from the flames. When you reach the top, you find rest with the Lord. He tells you to look down. He shows you others on their Cross. He has you watch as they go from the Cross to the flames and back again. As you watch, your heart begins to burn with compassion. You hurt for them, because you understand what they are going through. You cry out to the Lord, “Help them, Jesus! They are suffering so. It hurts. I know. I was there. Please, Jesus. Help them.” He looks to you and tells you, “That is what I commissioned you to do.” “I understand now, Lord.”

So, what does it mean to take up our Cross and follow Christ? It means understanding the purpose of our Cross experience is to get rid of what is in us that hinders our relationship with God. That is our sacrifice. But, the experience does not end there. It is not just for us. It is also for others. Jesus did not go to the Cross for Himself. He went so we could be reconciled to our heavenly Father. We should not go to our Cross for ourselves. Our purpose should be reconciliation! That is our gift - helping others to reconcile their relationship with Jesus. Ultimately, it cannot be about what we can get, but about what we can give. And, we cannot give a gift worthy of our Father until we have taken up our Cross to follow Christ.

What choice will you make today?

This was originally the heart of an essay done for a class at Biblical Life College and Seminary. It was turned into a personal experience for Women of Worship, Women of Witness Bible Study in our April 24, 2013 Meeting.