



Meeting Notes: “I See Me” – Idolatry and Idols
(November 6, 2013)

These notes capture our November 6, 2013 meeting. We opened our meeting in prayer and then began our evening. Topic notes from the evening 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.

CURRENT VISION: “The Year of Maturity: Learning how to hear with ears of faith that we may be hearers of the word and not doers only.” Scripture Reference: **Mark 4:24.**

Memory Verse: 2 Corinthians 10:4-6

Closing the Loop on Last Week: The heart of our closing the loop discussion is contained in the attached Teaching Notes. Other points captured are below:

- **Clarifying an “I See Me” exercise question.** In completing the exercise, the meaning of the question, “Am I being diligent in my pursuit of God with my thought?” was not immediately clear. Ultimately, the person doing the exercise realized, regardless of how her thought began, the process of taking her thought captive caused her to diligently seek God. **Takeaway.** Even if we’re not focused on God with our thought, the thought can serve as a trigger to turn our attention towards the Lord.
- **The Year of Maturity.** Since this is the “Year of Maturity,” we must each be mindful to “own our own stuff.” That means it’s possible our emotions may not be in tact during group; therefore, before expressing an offense, check the motive of our heart, and once we decide to express the offense, do so in love, that all things may be done decently and in order. **Takeaway.** Let’s learn how to resolve conflict by “owning our own stuff” and speaking the truth in love!
- **Leadership accountability.** Someone asked how am I to be corrected during group if I am having an “off” night. Based on our original vision (attached), “we allow others to speak the truth of God’s Word into our lives, making the necessary adjustments in our lives to live out our motto [which is to be doers of the Word and not hearers only].”¹ Consequently, we are each accountable to one another. However, for things to be done decently and in order, we all (including me) have to respect the authority God has given me for leading this group; therefore, don’t expect my accountability partners to correct me during group. However, trust God that correction does come! Moreover, to lead by example, I will ensure offenses brought to my attention are resolved, and if

¹ The original vision, as given by God, is attached.

necessary, a public apology rendered. **Takeaway.** I am not above correction, but just as we would not correct our supervisor in the middle of a meeting, don't expect for my accountability partners to correct me in the middle of group. Do expect, however, for me to "own my stuff."

- **Being bold.** If God places something on our heart to speak during group, we shouldn't be afraid to share it. None of us have perfect lives, but if God can use a donkey to speak His Word, He surely can speak through each of us despite any challenges we may be encountering. **Takeaway.** Don't muzzle God's voice!
- **Overall takeaway.** This meeting was a victory for us, because we learned how to wear our armor to bring glory, honor, and praise to God. What the devil meant for evil, God turned to good, and the result was growth for His daughters!

Discussion Topic: "I See Me" – Idolatry and Idols

- **Homework assignment.** We were to read Exodus 32 and Isaiah 30 and record what we took away from each chapter. Group was dedicated to what others learned; my takeaways are attached.
- **Key discussion points from Exodus 32:**
 - **Moses' reaction.** When God got angry, Moses pleaded with God on the people's behalf, but when Moses got back to the camp and saw what the people were doing, he too got angry! **Takeaway.** It's a lot easier to speak peace when the situation is not right in front of us.
 - **Impatience corrodes trust.** The Israelite's impatience made it hard for them to trust God. They didn't know what was going on in the background, where Moses was, what he was doing, or when he was coming back. As a result, they created their own god and placed their trust in the created thing rather than in the Creator. Likewise, when we become weary in waiting, we find other idols to occupy our attention. However, rather than be impatient, learn to trust God and those in authority, not necessarily for our good, but for the good of the whole. In placing our trust in God, we can trust He has our best interest in mind. **Takeaway.** We can be impatient and birth an idol, or we can be patient and birth a fruit of the Spirit.
 - **Blame shifting.** Rather than remind the people what God had said and done, Aaron gave into their demands. When confronted about his actions, Aaron blamed the people! **Takeaway.** Accept personal responsibility for our actions!
- **Key points from Isaiah 30:**
 - **Habitual sin.** The chapter addresses how our rebellious ways cause us

to practice habitual sin. We took particular note of how we “devise plans, but not of [His] Spirit, That [we] may add sin to sin” (v1 NKJV). We were actually able to relate to this to personal experiences. **Takeaway.** Since our plans begin with a thought, we have to start with a thought process in order to change.

- **What type of solution are we expecting?** We acknowledged when we return to our old ways (i.e. return to Egypt), we may not be expecting a Godly solution; we’re just expecting a solution. Besides, we admitted we know who to go to when we want agreement. However, when we “add sin to sin” (v1 NKJV), we can expect those sins will have consequences we will not like! **Takeaway.** Rather than look for agreement, seek a Godly solution.
- **Idols.** Anything that keeps us from obeying the Lord can become an idol in our heart, because we’re exalting that thing above our obedience to God. For example, thoughts can be arguments that exalt themselves above our obedience to God, making them an idol. Likewise, if we know what God is telling us to do, but we choose to hang onto pain, that pain then becomes an idol in our heart! **Takeaway.** Idols are a result of the condition of our heart, thus anyone or anything can become an idol!
- **God’s Word is the standard.** It’s not about the messenger, but the message, because God’s Word is the standard by which we judge, not ourselves. When we’re judging someone else by our standards (what we would or would not do), we are in essence judging the Law (James 4:11). In other words, rather than trusting God to do His job, we try to do it for Him, because, in all reality, we are finding Him lacking, hence we become judges of the Law! **Takeaway.** Stop trying to take matters into our hands, rather let Him Who gave the Law be the One who judges others!
- **Another wile of the devil.** A sense of entitlement opens the door for offense!
- **Overall takeaway.** Everything we are discussing goes back to the helmet of salvation. Our minds have to be right before we can even consider picking up the sword, because the enemy is only happy to watch us chop at each other and ourselves. As we have experienced, Christian on Christian crime is not pretty. Since group, God revealed Christian on non-Christian crime is downright deadly!
- **Additional resources.** “Idols in My Heart” (June 26, 2006) provides a more in-depth discussion on Isaiah 30:22 and “God of Justice” (August 7, 2006) begins with Isaiah 30:15, but provides a more in-depth discussion on the entire chapter.²

² Both documents are available on the Reflections page of the website: www.wow2women.com

Homework Assignments:

- **Memory verses.** Please continue to work on all the memory verses: **Psalm 33:4, Psalm 51:6, Hebrews 11:1, 6, 2 Corinthians 10:4-6, and Mark 4:24.** The more we sow the Word in our hearts, the more it will help reveal and push out the lies the enemy uses to torment us.

Next Meeting: We will be discussing offense and bitterness.

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.

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.



ATTACHMENT: TEACHING NOTES FOR NOVEMBER 6, 2013

Closing the Loop on Last Week:

- **Concerns about group:** Concerns have been expressed about the new teaching format. Some of these concerns were addressed in August, but may not have been communicated to the entire group. Once we finish the Armor Study, we will have more flexibility during our discussions; however, we will continue to be purposeful in our objective, which is to learn how to apply the Word of God to our lives.
- **Lessons learned:**
 - **Unresolved issues lead to conflict.** When God's Word is not used to resolve issues, conflict will eventually erupt, which is what we experienced last week. Rather than bring correction in a specific situation, I resolved it by entering an agreement intended to protect my heart. That agreement ultimately placed a hole in my breastplate of righteousness, which opened the door to offense and a root of bitterness to grow. My offense affected how I interacted with certain people during group, which contributed to the offense experienced last week. **Takeaway.** A carnal solution does not produce Godly fruit; therefore, ensure we resolve conflict using spiritual weapons.
 - **"I See You."** Eventually, we will discuss "I See You," but in the meantime, please remember I am human. I have feelings just like everyone else. I hurt just like everyone else. I make mistakes just like everyone else. So, please give me the benefit of the doubt when you are concerned about something. You might even want to check on me to make sure I'm okay! **Takeaway.** I am not perfect, and I have faults, so please don't expect me to not make mistakes. You can, however, expect me to confess my faults when they are identified to me!
 - **Using the resources God has given us.** Because we used our available resources (our journals, the Meeting Notes, etc.), we were able to shift our focus from the circumstances to applying what we have learned. As a result, we were able to identify the origin of the conflict and resolve it with God's truth. Resolution would not have happened had we not each sought to have ears of faith! **Takeaway.** It takes faith to keep our eyes on the battle rather than on the circumstances.
 - **Evaluating our thoughts.** We learned several things about the "I See Me" exercise. One, we were able to recognize the importance of just answering the question when completing the exercise. Any thing more

than that can lead to confusion, and God is not the author of confusion. Two, even a peacekeeping thought can become mutated and behave as a stronghold in certain circumstances. Three, when there are no flags to identify a thought as a stronghold, that thought may be intended to turn our focus from the situation towards God. And, lastly, we need to better understand the three different aspects of 2 Corinthians 10:4-6. These verses identify strongholds, arguments, and thoughts (perceptions) that need to be addressed. Therefore, we need to make sure we don't just limit our thought to being a stronghold, but understand it can also be an argument that needs to be cast down, or a perception that needs to be brought into the obedience of Christ. **Takeaway.** The exercise works, but we still have things to learn.

- **Offense vs sin.** There's a difference in being offended and someone sinning against us. Offense is something that generates in our own heart. (We will have a refresher teaching on offense next week.) However, when someone sins against us, they act contrary to God's Word. Nevertheless, both sin and offense can be involved in a conflict. **Takeaway.** Know the difference in what we're offended about and how someone sinned against us to better facilitate conflict resolution.
- **Recognizing the wiles of the devil.** While we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, the devil uses flesh and blood to throw arrows our way! In resolving last week's conflict, we recognized how the devil was using each of us to throw arrows at the other! **Takeaway.** If we focus on the arrow rather than the person or the circumstance, we can find the chink in our armor that is allowing the enemy's arrows to penetrate!
- **Recognizing and dealing with a combustible arrow.** If something inflames our emotions, it is a combustible arrow! Although we may not be able to keep the arrow from exploding and inflaming our emotions, we can decide what to do with those emotions. We can allow them to control us or we can submit them to God (listen to music, pray, listen to or read the Word, sleep, take a walk, or whatever works to calm our soul). Once we have submitted our emotions to God, we can then allow His Word to direct our next steps.
- **Let all things be done decently and in order.**
 - **Resolving conflict.** Matthew 18:15-17 outlines what to do when we feel like someone has sinned against us. Going forward, please resolve conflict accordingly. That means if we believe someone has sinned against us (done something that is contrary to God's Word), please first go and talk to that person. If the two of you cannot reach resolution, then talk to one of the leaders in the group. If I'm the problem, talk to one of the co-leaders. Once you have talked to a leader, then you and the leader(s) you spoke with need to talk to the person who sinned against you in order to

bring resolution to the problem. If that doesn't work, we need to discuss the problem during a group meeting, because maybe another sister can provide an insight that will help bring resolution and reconciliation.

Takeaway. God has provided a process by which to handle conflict. We will use that process going forward.

- **Side chatter during group.** Going forward, may we commit to eliminating the side chatter (regardless of how it occurs)? If someone has a question, others in the group may have that same question, so rather than have sidebar conversations, bring the question and the answer to the entire group. That also means no texting each other during group, because it causes an unnecessary distraction.

Discussion Topic: Idolatry and Idols

- **Application Exercise:** What can we learn from Exodus 32 and Isaiah 30 about idolatry and idols?
- **Definitions.**³ Exodus 32 is a good example of idolatry and the resulting idol.
 - **Idolatry defined.** “the worship of a physical object as a god,” and “immoderate attachment or devotion to something.” By their actions, we see the children of Israel engage in idolatry. Idolatry creates idols!
 - **Idol defined.** “a picture or object that is worshipped as a god.” The result of their idolatry was the golden calf, and it is the object (idol) worshipped as a god. However, an idol can be any person, place, or thing that causes us to sin against God!
- **Understanding Isaiah 30:22 (NKJV):** The “Reflections and Revelations Newsletter: “Idols in My Heart”⁴ captures the study of this verse; however, for convenience, the essence of that writing is summarized here:
 - **Getting rid of our idols.** In order to get rid of our idols, we have to cast them away and call them unclean! In other words, we have to make the choice we no longer want to have anything to do with them and then act upon that choice. That does not necessarily mean we always have to get rid of the person, place or thing, but we do have to deal with the heart issue that is causing that person, place, or thing to be an idol for us.
 - **Recognizing the idol in our heart.** Our graven images overlaid with silver and our molten images plated with gold represent something created (I would think by us) that is seen of value hiding something

³ Merriam-Webster's Online Dictionary (www.merriam-webster.com/definition/idolatry).

⁴ This Newsletter can be found on the Reflections page of the website: www.wow2women.com. It is dated Aug 7, 2006 and can be found in writings listed under the year 2006.

underneath we have attached to ourselves to look good. In other words, we may adopt a behavior, an attitude, or a mindset that looks good to others and even to us, but when examined in the light of God's Word, it is really an idol in our heart!

Homework Assignment:

- **Memory Verses.** Please continue to work on all the memory verses: **Psalm 33:4, Psalm 51:6, Hebrews 11:1, 6, 2 Corinthians 10:4-6, and Mark 4:24.** The more we sow the Word in our hearts, the more it will help reveal and push out the lies the enemy uses to torment and oppress us.



ATTACHMENT: ORIGINAL VISION DOCUMENT

VISION: A bible-based, practical application journey through the word of God

PURPOSE: To create an atmosphere that fosters transparency, discipleship, and the outpouring of God's love

MISSION: To bring women of God together in an atmosphere that affects change in us, so we may impact others

GOAL: To disciple women of God in the practical application of God's word

MOTTO: To be doers of the word and not hearers only

CORE VALUES: These are our core values. They are held together by love and commitment – for and to God and each other

- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** We allow others to speak the truth of God's Word into our lives, making the necessary adjustments in our lives to live out our motto
- **TRANSPARENCY:** We are open with those we have made ourselves accountable to, so they can affectively minister to our needs
- **INTIMACY:** We will allow our transparency to create an environment of intimacy where we allow our sisters in Christ to "in-to-me-see"
- **CONFIDENTIALITY:** We will hold dear to our hearts the things our sisters share with us to foster an environment of trust to maintain our transparency and intimacy

ETIQUETTE REMINDER: Let everything you do and say be tempered by mercy, compassion, and love.



ATTACHMENT: LESSONS LEARNED FROM EXODUS 32 AND ISAIAH 30

Exodus 32:

- The people were focused on Moses, and chose to lean to their own understanding (not knowing what happened to him) rather than trusting in God who had brought them out of Egypt. **Takeaway.** I have to keep my eyes on God and not what I see.
- Rather than correct the Israelites, Aaron went along with their plan, which created an idol and caused all of them to commit the sin of idolatry. **Takeaway.** When I don't bring correction to a group member, I create an idol and lead people into idolatry.
- Even when others don't see what we're doing, God sees, and He can and will expose our sin to those whom He appoints over us to watch over our souls. **Takeaway.** Even when I think I've gotten away with something, God will bring my sin to light in some shape, form, or fashion!
- Aaron blamed the people rather than take responsibility for his own actions! **Takeaway.** We have to take responsibility for our own actions!
- Moses took action that required some of the Israelites to choose God! **Takeaway.** There comes a point where we have to choose God above all else.
- Moses was concerned about God's reputation based on how God dealt with the Israelites. He didn't want their enemies to be able to mock God. **Takeaway.** I can relate, because I also become concerned about how others will view God based on how we behave.
- Moses tried to take responsibility for the people's sins, but God wouldn't let him. He said He would blot those from His book who sinned against Him, and that each person would be punished for their sin. He even plagued them, because of their sin. **Takeaway.** Like Moses, I tend to take things too personally. But, I have to remember I am not responsible for what others do. I am only responsible for what I do. As Galatians says, we will reap what we sow; therefore, our sin has consequences that will manifest themselves in our lives!
- Verse 34 brings a sense of conviction for me to lead "the people" according to the vision God spoke to me. **Takeaway.** I need to do a better job of staying focused and keeping others focused on the vision God provided for this group.



Isaiah 30:

- When we are in rebellion, we don't consult God about what to do. Instead we come up with our own plans, which add sin to sin. **Takeaway.** When I make a decision that is not rooted and grounded in God's Word, I add the sin of my decision to the sin of the situation I am making a decision about.
- Our plans bring shame and humiliation. **Takeaway.** Don't I know it! I am eating the harvest of those seeds right now!
- When we look back to our old ways and place our confidence in "ungodly" people, we will not get help, for ungodly people cannot benefit us! **Takeaway.** Don't return to my old ways to solve a problem, but seek to apply what God has taught me.
- When we are in rebellion, we don't want to see or hear the truth. Instead, we want others to make us feel good, but God says that separates us from Him. **Takeaway.** Speak the truth in love and seek to receive the truth even when I don't want to hear it.
- When we place our trust in our worldly ways, there are consequences we will not like! **Takeaway.** The fruit of my choices will be determined by whether I follow God's wisdom or the world's wisdom.
- If we return and rest in God, He will save us. And, if we are quiet and confident in Him, we will have strength. But even with that knowledge, we still choose to go our own way – again with consequences! **Takeaway.** Keep my eyes on Jesus. Period!
- God waits on us, because He does desire to be gracious towards us, and when we exalt Him, He is merciful towards us. **Takeaway.** God is patient with us so He can pour out His grace and mercy upon us, but we have to get rid of our idols and exalt Him to receive His mercy.
- God hears us when we cry out to Him, and He answers us. **Takeaway.** God is waiting on me to come to Him!
- He may "touch our circumstances" in an unpleasant way to get our attention, but the end result is to get us focused on our teachers so they can guide us in the way we should go. **Takeaway.** Learn how to listen to my husband more when I'm struggling!
- If we want blessings from the Lord, we have to get rid of the idols in our heart! **Takeaway.** Desire for the Lord to create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me, so I will not have any idols in my heart!