
MEETING NEWSLETTER

VISION CHECK (cont)...

Welcome to WoW², Women of Worship, Women of Witness. This newsletter captures topics discussed during our meeting on May 13th. The newsletter may not capture everything, and the topics may not be in the exact order discussed. The newsletter is intended to capture key points from our evening together, with like topics being grouped together for convenience. We hope you are blessed as you join us on our journey.

CURRENT VISION: Thriving in the Wilderness. We will cultivate a safe place to grow in a peaceful environment by preparing the soil of our heart to receive and respond to God's guidance, anchoring ourselves in the Holy Spirit. **We will operate** according to the established guidelines of our group, all of which will bring to light the changes we need to make in our lives, so we can gain the nourishment necessary to grow as individuals and as a group. **Thriving**, while in the Wilderness, **will be the outcome of our growth**.

TOPICS DISCUSSED:

Vision Check in Relationship to Lesson 6 – Connecting the Dots. We picked up where we left off last week with our vision check. The framework for our discussion was, "I have my vision; I know where I'm at, now what is my next step forward?" In addition, I sent out the following via text to those currently attending: "For every area of our life we're being challenged in, let's go back to our vision to see how and why we're being tested, as we seek Holy Spirit's guidance on how to move forward!" Below are some themes and the corresponding nuggets from the evening:

- **Feeling Overwhelmed.** When we feel overwhelmed, it's like we're treading water, but we're too far from the shore to make it back safely, so we'll drown. The tired that comes with feeling overwhelmed is like we're carrying an 80lb backpack, and before we can get it emptied, someone is putting something else in there, so we end up thinking about everything we need to do, which can leave us feeling mentally defeated before we even begin. In these moments, we recognize just how little control we have.

Takeaway. Feeling overwhelmed is fear in disguise. We're focused on how we're going to get this or that done. We think we're not good enough. We're not strong enough. There aren't enough hours in the day. All of that is rooted in fear. However, when we learn how to just breathe, we can calm our fears.

- **Solutions for feeling overwhelmed.** Here are a few things we discussed that will help us **stop, rest, and trust the Lord**, because if we can get to where we're not "going crazy" in our mind, we disarm the enemy of our souls.
 - Learn how to recognize when our mind is starting to spin out of control.
 - Stop giving our "sack of cares" so much power. Learn to take the power back by changing our focus. Don't worry, because worry only leads to grumbling. And stop thinking about all of our responsibilities. Instead of focusing on the next 10 things that need to be done, focus on the thing right in front of us that we can get done.
 - Seek to not be stressed out, lest we end up trying too hard, which only causes us to trip over our own feet.
 - If we have to pause for a minute, that's okay. Just be ready for when we feel like we have traction again, and then start moving.
 - Recognize areas of peace in our lives. One of the things the enemy wants us to think is when things are out of our control, we don't have "one little piece of anything where there is peace." BUT, we recognized that for the lie it is, because we can usually find at least one small area of our life where we have peace! It's those bits and pieces of peace that give us energy, hope, and the next little piece of what we need to keep going to the next step.
 - Cultivate quiet time with the Lord to overcome the distractions. The distractions are a part of our being tested and tried. When we focus on them, we can't focus on what's important.
 - **Overall takeaway.** Cultivate our time with the Lord, so we can be still, trust God, not lean on our own understanding, walk by faith and not by sight, and

only focus on what we need to do next. Even though we still have to take care of our responsibilities, we can usually find at least one small area of peace to focus on to give us energy and hope as we go through our trial.

- **Perseverance.** Last week, we looked at the progression of fruit found in 2 Peter 1:5-9 last week and noted how “perseverance” is a common theme for us all. As we continue to sow the seed of self-control, we will cultivate the fruit of perseverance, which is the “persistence in doing something despite the difficulty or delay in achieving success.”¹ Thus, even though it may be hard, we’re not going to give up even when we’re getting hit from every side. **Takeaway.** We’re all being challenged in different ways, and we’re all cultivating perseverance.
- **Resolving conflict.** Without going into details, I shared how my look back at my vision revealed I’m being challenged in two areas: being able to resolve conflict and knowing when, what, how, and when not to speak. From this I could see my battle with perseverance comes when I want to help someone who’s struggling. A great analogy is when someone is drowning. I have to learn how to let people finish thrashing in the water before I go diving in after them, as not to create co-dependent relationships where people rely on me instead of God. I also have to recognize when someone is able to get themselves back to shore, and my interference could cause them to panic, and we both end up drowning! As a result of this conversation, I recognized I need to re-evaluate the motives of my heart when helping others, continue to pray for discernment about when and when not to help, and recognize my motives can change based on the nature of the relationship. I was also reminded that, sometimes, not immediately stepping in to help make it easier for others actually helps them grow. In addition, I need to do a better job of managing my and other’s expectations within the context of accountability relationships. **Takeaway.** Perseverance and discernment are connected; it takes discernment to know what, when, how, and when not to speak. And, it takes perseverance to wait on God for that discernment, so I don’t get ahead of Him; plus, the waiting gives me time to check my motives.

¹ <https://www.google.com/search?client=safari&rls=en&q=define+perseverance&ie=UTF-8&oe=UTF-8>.

- **A fishing pole or a net.** When it comes to helping others, we can be like a fishing pole or a net. A fishing pole can only catch one fish, but a net can catch more. Likewise, alone we can only do so much, but as a group, we can be woven together to become like a strong net to “catch others” who need help. After all, we’re supposed to be advancing the Kingdom of God, and we can do more collectively than we can individually, which took us back to our study in Ephesians.² We’re all “knit together by what every joint supplies ... (4:16), so when one of us is out of place, the whole body suffers. Likewise, the whole body suffers when we try to do things alone! **Takeaway.** We are stronger together than we are individually.
- **Utilizing our resources.** The website (www.wow2women.com) is a great resource for us to use during our trials, especially if we take time to become familiar with what’s out there when we’re not in a trial.

Song for the week: We have two songs this week: “Just Be Held” by Casting Crowns: (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tIZitK6_IMQ) and “Breathe” by Jonny Diaz (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hnjeMwxFuBA>).

Homework Assignment(s): Complete Lesson 7 – Search My Heart, and if needed, continue working on your vision check.

Next Meeting: Our next meeting will be on Tuesday, May 19th via Zoom. The current plan is to close the loop on vision check and discuss Lesson 7 – Search My Heart.

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.

² This study can be found at <https://www.wow2women.com/the-year-of-becoming>.