



## **Raising Godly Women (RGW) – Natural and Spiritual Development (March 16, 2016)**

Raising Godly Women (RGW) is an extension of the Women of Worship Women of Witness (WoW<sup>2</sup>) bible study small group. Once a quarter, mothers bring in their daughters so the older women can teach the younger women. These notes capture our meeting held on March 16, 2016. We opened our meeting in prayer and began our study for the evening. Topic notes may not be in the order discussed during group, and they are not intended to cover everything. They are intended as highlights to capture the essence of our evening. General notes follow each topic that was discussed.

**God's Mission for the Group:** For the older women to teach the younger women (Titus 2:3-5)

**Current Vision:** The Year of Becoming: Understanding the Seasons of Our Lives

### **Scripture References:**

**Genesis 1:14:** Then God said, "Let there be lights in the firmament of the heavens to divide the day from the night: and let them be for **signs and seasons**, and for days and years" (NKJV). (bold added)

**1 Corinthians 15:46,** "However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual" (NKJV).

### **Introduction – Closing the Loop**

We opened by discussing the homework assignment from last week: "Mothers and daughters talk about and reflect on what we discussed, sharing any new revelations you may receive." Turns out, our mother and her daughters were able to sum up what we had discussed in one sentence: "The reason we attribute all those things to the seasons is because that's what we experience." This statement led us to the following points:

- **Experience** looks backward, but **wisdom** looks backward and then forward to change future decisions!
- **Expectations** get built on what we have experienced instead of using wisdom to know it's not always what we see [that matters], so we don't learn to lean on our faith, which puts us in a bad head space. Bad head space becomes an obstacle, because we make choices based on the bad head space instead of wisdom.
- **Choices:** How we interpret the signs and seasons in our lives influences our choices!

### **Discussion Topic: Natural and Spiritual Development**

Since God created four seasons, we discussed how to narrow the scope of our lives into four individual and noticeable seasons. After looking at several different options, we used how we attend school as our example, which gave us the following seasons: birth to PreK, Kindergarten to 5th (elementary school), 6th to 8th (middle school), and 9th to 12th (high school).

## Natural Seasons

Using our years in school, we jotted down some of the lessons we learn in each of them. It's important to note that while discussing the things we learn in school, we had an active discussion on the importance of history. We concluded that discussion with, if we don't know our history, we are more apt to repeat it. This will become even more noticeable as we look at our spiritual development. Here is what we captured for our natural seasons in school:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Birth to Pre K</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Manners/behavior</li> <li>○ Potty training</li> <li>○ Alphabets</li> <li>○ Morals</li> <li>○ Communication</li> <li>○ Learning how to think for yourself</li> <li>○ How to be a helper</li> <li>○ <b>Summary:</b> In this stage, we are prepared to enter formal education</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>K through 5<sup>th</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ General Science, Reading, Art, Music, and Math</li> <li>○ Physical Exercise</li> <li>○ <b>Summary:</b> In this stage, we gain the basic building blocks of academic learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>6 through 8<sup>th</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Dress Code (appropriate for the physical and hormonal changes occurring)</li> <li>○ More advanced Science, Math, Reading, etc</li> <li>○ Conflict Management</li> <li>○ Behavior Standards</li> <li>○ How to be a model citizen</li> <li>○ <b>Summary:</b> In this stage, we gain more building blocks for learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>9 through 12<sup>th</sup></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Even more advanced academics</li> <li>○ Responsibility</li> <li>○ Preparation for the "real world"</li> <li>○ Career oriented (what will we do to earn a living)</li> <li>○ Contributing/functional member of society</li> <li>○ Critical thinking</li> <li>○ <b>Summary:</b> In this stage, we gain even more building blocks of learning</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Life

In each season there is preparation for the next one, supervision, and a strong support system available to us. However, when we leave school, we enter our season called "**life**" where we leave home and begin to live on our own. Therefore, once we enter "life," we are independent! We no longer have the same supervision and support system we had in school. Even in life, we need to know how to ask for help when we need it as we take what we learned in school and apply it to our every day living.

## Spiritual Seasons

In keeping with our four seasons, we turned to the parable of the sower and the seed for our spiritual development. We then likened each soil in the parable to a natural season described in one of my psychology books that will help us understand how we develop spiritually in relationship to this parable.<sup>1</sup> Here is what we captured:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Wayside (Path)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Devil steals the Word IF we lack <b>understanding</b></li> <li>○ In the Natural: <b>Birth</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Because understanding is so important, we looked at ways we gain understanding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>&gt; correction brings understanding</li> <li>&gt; watching others</li> <li>&gt; experience</li> <li>&gt; situations we can learn from: reading and application</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Rocky</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We like what we hear, so we receive it with joy, but we <b>lack roots</b>. As a result, we fall away (don't obey the Word) in a time of testing.</li> <li>○ In the Natural: <b>Childhood</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Thorny</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ We withstand (obey God for a season), BUT the cares, riches, or pleasure of life choke out the Word.</li> <li>○ In the Natural: <b>Adolescence</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>We discussed how trials reveal our individual cares, riches, and pleasures of life that choke out the Word.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Good</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Patiently produces mature fruit</li> <li>○ In the Natural: <b>Adulthood</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Maturity

Just like school prepares us for every day life, understanding each of the soils in the parable of the sower and the seed prepares our heart so we can walk in spiritual maturity in our every day lives. Again, we have to know our history (lessons learned during our trials) so we don't repeat our mistakes! We also need to ask for help when we need it!

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<sup>1</sup> Paul D Meier, M.D et. al, *Introduction to Psychology and Counseling: Christian Perspectives and Applications*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1982, 1981), 256-257

### More on the Wayside (Path)

We discussed the difference in something being purposeful or not. For instance **experience** is **non-purposeful**, because it's something that happens to us. **Application**, on the other hand, is **purposeful**, because we are intentionally trying to do what we know.

We discussed what we **learn** becomes **head knowledge**—information we know. However, once we **understand** something it can become **heart knowledge**—something we have the desire and the know-how to do in our every day lives.

We discussed we have to understand something to believe whether or not it's true. Once we understand it and believe it's true, we still have to accept it as a truth that applies to us. We discussed the example of preparing for rain as described in "Facing the Giants." Here are a couple of YouTube clips to explain what preparing for rain means:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAxwS8KyMQQ>

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uCj5\\_a3nbw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uCj5_a3nbw)

The first clip is the head knowledge. Information he had in his head. The second clip is heart knowledge. He demonstrates his understanding of the information he was given and then put it into practice!

### Wrapping Up our Discussion

It's important to note there are only four soils in the parable of the sower and the seed just as God only created four seasons. However, in discussing the seasons of our lives, we saw how the years we are in school prepare us for the life we will live afterward. Likewise, as we studied the soils in the parable of the sower and the seed, we saw how each of those soils prepares us for producing mature fruit in our lives. Therefore, spiritual maturity is our goal.

#### Next week's lesson: Connecting the Dots

We will connect the dots between what we have already discussed and how to look for it in our every day lives between now and our next Raising Godly Women session.

**Homework:** Mothers and daughters talk about and reflect on what we discussed, looking ahead to the soils we did not discuss.

#### Closing:

We closed out the meeting in prayer thanking God for what was shared during our time together, lifting up those who were unable to join us, and praying our time apart continue to be filled with and protected by the Holy Spirit until we meet again.

*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*

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[www.wow2women.com](http://www.wow2women.com).*