



*21-day devotional*

You were created to flourish. The seed of your potential is a priceless gift from your Creator that must be nurtured. Growing into the women God has called us to be isn't easy, but it's worth the work. This is what the next 21 days are all about. Together, we're going to get rooted in God's Word so we can grow and bloom like never before.

DAY  
1

# Introduction

Verses  
for Today  
*Jeremiah 17:7-8*  
*Isaiah 43:19*

**Flourish:** *To grow in a healthy, vigorous way, especially as a result of a particularly favorable environment or conditions. To thrive, increase, blossom, multiply.*

What comes to mind when you hear the word flourish? Probably flowers in full bloom. Lavish gardens. All colorful signs of life.

But what about a tiny seed planted beneath the cold dark ground? This is actually where flourishing begins, but for most of us it's easy to think about the fruit and forget that growth starts at the root. A beautiful flower is always the result of a buried seed.

Maybe you can identify more with a seed than a flower right now. You don't feel like you're blossoming—you feel like you're being buried. Maybe you can't see the light because you're surrounded by darkness. You don't feel like you're flourishing—you feel frustrated by things that are out of your control.

If that's you today, I want to encourage you with truth.

**YOU were created to flourish and unlike the flowers that are here in the spring and gone in winter, you were meant to thrive in every season.**

*“But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with **roots that reach deep** into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green and they never stop producing fruit.” Jeremiah 17:7-8 (NLT)*

I love the image of roots reaching deep into the water. How deep you reach ultimately determines how high you grow. We usually want God to take us *higher*, but I believe He often invites us *deeper* (and sometimes deeper feels darker).

Flourishing requires work, strength, and patience and the truth is, we don't have *what* it takes. But we know *Who* it takes. God is a good Gardener and He knows how to help us produce fruit in the hardest of seasons, if we will only reach for Him.

For the next 21 days, will you commit to reaching for God's Word with me? Will you reach for godly community that's going to help you grow?



I believe God is doing a new thing through the women in His Church and my prayer for you is that you would be convinced of your immeasurable worth and limitless potential. You're more important than you know, and more influential than you realize.

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on Jeremiah 17:7-8 and as you do, think about these questions:*

1. What have you been reaching for lately? Is it helping you or stunting your growth?
2. How has the "heat" been turned up in your life?
3. What are you lacking and how could reaching for God fill that gap?

# DAY 2

# Location, Location, Location

## Verses for Today

*Psalm 1:1-3*  
*Psalm 92:12-14*

You should know that any plant that ends up in my home is in grave danger.

I recently gave my pitiful, apparently dead orchid to my dear friend, Rita. I believe she has the gift of healing, because within a week she sent me pictures of a well cared for, and yes, blooming orchid! The difference? Location.

These poor “souls” were given a second chance by simply being placed in a nourishing environment—a place where they would be loved and more importantly...watered!

We can never underestimate the impact that a life-giving environment has on our ability (or inability) to reach our potential. James Clear wrote, “Environment is the invisible hand that shapes our behavior.”

Think about your weekly rhythms. Who do you surround yourself with? Are they speaking life over you or draining you? Do you have people like Rita who are pouring into you?

Are your daily habits helping you grow or holding you back?

Psalm 1 illustrates this so beautifully when it says we will be like “a tree planted by streams of water” when we meditate on His Word. The Word of God is as necessary to our everyday life as water is to the life of a tree.

In the same way water is necessary for a tree to survive, grow, and produce fruit, God’s Word is an absolute necessity for our survival, maturity, and ability to produce spiritual fruit. Just as the tree puts down its roots to draw on the water for strength each day, we must also put down our roots and draw from His Word daily.

If you’re feeling depleted today, could it be that you’re not planted in the right place or reaching for the right things?

Maybe this week instead of reaching for a remote or an app, you reach for God’s Word. Instead of hanging with those girls at school who leave you feeling drained because of their gossip, you lean into the girls in your small group who fill you up with truth.

Don’t underestimate the power of being planted in the right place, sister.



Psalm 1:3 tells us the person rooted in God's Word will prosper in *whatever* they do.

God uses His Word, His Holy Spirit, His people, and our circumstances to grow us to maturity. Putting ourselves in places and spaces to receive the nourishment He has for us will allow us to not only flourish in whatever we do, but in ways we can't imagine!

## Dig Deeper:

*Read Psalm 1:1-3 in more than one version.*

1. What is God saying to you through this verse?
2. Where have you felt spiritually dehydrated lately (e.g., irritable, stressed, depressed, etc.)?
3. How can you nourish your spirit with God's Word and godly community this week?

# DAY 3

# Remain

## Verses for Today

*Jeremiah 17:7-8*

*John 15:1-11*

*Isaiah 64:8*

**Remain:** *to stay in the same place, with the same person. To stay, abide, persist, and carry on.*

This might seem obvious, but the only way for a tree to truly flourish is to stay planted. Nothing good ever grows if it's constantly being uprooted. Once you're in godly community and rooted in truth, the key is to *stay* there.

The tree referenced in Jeremiah 17 didn't retreat when it felt the heat. It reached deeper so it could remain planted through the struggle. Science tells us that trees actually need strong winds to blow against them because it causes their root systems to grow deeper, which supports the trees as they grow taller. In other words, the strength we need is often forged in our struggles and suffering.

But when the winds of confusion, disappointment, and fear blow our instinct usually isn't to *remain*—it's to *run*.

Perhaps this is why Jesus challenged His closest friends to have staying power in John 15. As the time drew near for Jesus to fulfill His mission of going to the cross, He knew the temptation for His followers would be to retreat.

So He took this moment, sandwiched between the Last Supper and the Garden of Gethsemane, to encourage them to *remain*. For three years, the disciples had followed Jesus by faith and now it was time for them to flourish like never before by remaining faithful through the unknowns.

In Jesus' parting words, He gave the disciples the secret to a fruitful and flourishing life and it's to simply remain in His love. To practice the presence of God daily (*hourly*). To stay firmly planted in seasons of pruning, no matter how painful.

It's simple, but it's not easy. Receiving salvation is a one-time decision. However, remaining in God's presence is a lifelong commitment that requires hundreds of small daily decisions. When worry threatens to pull you away, *remaining* looks like turning the worship music up louder. When struggles tempt you to close yourself off from community, *remaining* looks like opening up to your small group. When fear whispers in your heart, *remaining* looks like talking back to those lies with the truth of God's Word.



Sister, take heart today. The thing that's frustrating you might be the very thing God has allowed into your life to help you flourish. What you label a painful season in the moment may turn out to be a pruning season designed to prepare you for growth you can't imagine. We see the pain inside the struggle, but the Gardener sees the potential inside the seed.

No matter what season you're in, flourishing is only possible when you remain with the Father because He alone knows what you need and who you're to become.

## Dig Deeper:

*Read all of John 15.*

1. What are some ways you feel disconnected from the Vine lately?
2. How do you typically experience the presence of God?
3. How can you create space for more of these experiences in your daily life?



DAY  
4

# Identity Issues

Verses  
for Today

*Mark 5:25-34*  
*Jeremiah 1:5*  
*Psalms 139:13-18*

We all have issues. It's part of being human. We have hurts, habits, and hang-ups that, if not addressed, can hold us back in life.

Insecurities can become part of our identity, leading us into deeper issues. Lies turn into labels, which turn into lids to our growth.

The woman in Mark 5 was no stranger to issues. In fact, she's known as "the woman with the **issue** of blood" in many translations of the Bible. She was known and identified by her **ISSUE**, which impacted every aspect of her life.

She was an outcast. She was considered unclean and couldn't marry or have children. No doubt, the people around her would rush by her, never stopping to look her way. And if they did look, they could only bear a brief glance because they couldn't see past the obvious pitiful effects of her issue.

For 12 years she had suffered. She had endured countless treatments and doctor visits, all in hopes of fixing her issue. She drained her bank account looking for a cure but her condition only worsened. After more than a decade of searching for a resolution, she was out of money and nearly out of hope. It was her desperation that drove her to Jesus.

And that's when everything changed.

As people pressed in around Jesus, her faith drove her to fight through the same crowds she had spent most of her life avoiding. With all the faith she had left, she reached out and touched Him...

And then He STOPPED. He SAW her, and not only did He heal her issue, but He SPOKE the word that gave her a new identity as His DAUGHTER.

There is so much definition and destiny wrapped up in that one word. Jesus knew she didn't just have a medical issue—after years of suffering, she also had an identity issue. What Jesus was saying to her, is what Jesus wants to speak to you today, "Daughter, I SEE beyond your issues and your labels. You aren't an outcast. You aren't rejected, and you haven't been forgotten. You are valuable, priceless, and worth stopping for. You are My daughter. As My child, you have full access to the riches of My Kingdom. You will no longer be known by your issues and the limitations



that accompany them. My deepest desire is to give you peace and freedom.”

When we embrace our identity as His daughters, our DNA is no longer our destiny and the labels of our past are no longer the limitations for our future. We're free to flourish.

## Dig Deeper:

*Read Luke 12:6-7, Isaiah 41:9-10, and Psalm 139:13-16.*

1. How do these verses encourage you to embrace your identity as a daughter of God?
2. What would it look like for you to identify as a daughter of God?
3. What would you do differently if you embraced that new identity today? What would change in your life?

DAY  
5

# New Identity. New Opportunities.

Verse  
for Today  
*John 4:4-41*

Jesus met another woman in John 4 who, like the woman in Mark 5, had an issue that drove her to isolation.

As Jesus stopped at a water well in the heat of the day, He struck up a conversation with this Samaritan woman.

We don't know all the details of her story, but we do know she had five failed marriages and was currently living with a man who wasn't her husband. *(It's important to note here that women weren't allowed to divorce their husbands during this point in history. Divorce could only be granted when it was the husband's desire, so while we don't know the specifics of her situation it's probably safe to assume this was a woman who had endured unimaginable pain.)*

It was customary for women to draw water from the well *early* in the morning, before the sun caused unbearable and uncomfortable heat, but Jesus met this woman late in the day. Perhaps she chose the heat of the day over the scorching insults that would've come from her community. Her nationality would've also made her an outsider to the Jewish community that Jesus and His disciples belonged to.

But when Jesus met her, He spoke words that echoed a new reality for her. Jesus encountered hundreds of people each day, but He chose to share precious insider information with the person society deemed as an outsider. For the first time in His public ministry, He revealed Himself to this woman as the true Messiah, the One who people had been longing for.

This news was too good to keep to herself and with no formal training and a faith that was about five minutes old, she stepped into a new opportunity. Leaving her labels behind, she went back to the very place where her infamous reputation preceded her, armed with truth and a new message.

In verse 39, it says that many from that region believed in Jesus because of the woman's testimony. When others saw an adulterer to be avoided, Jesus saw an evangelist to be enlisted.

Jesus didn't condemn her that day by the well. He called her—just like He's calling us today. No longer do we need to live in isolation. Our identities are rooted in God's unconditional, unending, and unearned love so we can walk into any space with our heads held high.



Jesus not only died so that this love would be accessible to us, but He also spent His earthly life actively looking for people to pour His love upon. He sought out the broken because He saw them not for who they were, but for who they would BECOME.

Is there a label that has put a lid on your growth? Jesus always sees the seed of potential within us and calls us to become more than we could ever be on our own. New identity comes with new opportunities to leave your past behind and reach your kingdom potential.

## Dig Deeper:

*Read 2 Corinthians 5:17.*

1. Are there labels you're wearing that are holding you back? What would it look like for you to shed those labels?
2. Has there been an issue in your life that has overwhelmed your true identity (divorce, abuse, sickness, etc.)? How might this issue be disconnecting you from your destiny?
3. How can you begin looking for the new doors God is opening for you?

# DAY 6

## Identity Isn't Discovered From A Distance

### Verses for Today

*Luke 19:1-10*

*Jeremiah 1:5*

*Psalms 139:13-18*

If you've met my son, Jefferson, you may wonder if I had anything to do with his making. He has become the spitting image of my husband, Todd. The longer he's on this planet, the more and more he becomes like him. Not only in physical appearance, but I've watched them grow more similar over these past few years in many ways.

Jefferson engages fully and enthusiastically in worship services, has a heart for people who suffer, and intentionally speaks life over people he encounters every day, just like Todd. (There is also an ice-chomping thing, but I don't want to get side-tracked here). As Jefferson has spent an enormous amount of time with Todd over the years, he has grown, changed, and become *more* like his father.

In the same way, the closer we get to our heavenly Father the more we will be transformed into His likeness. When we truly embrace our identity as His loved children things begin to change. *WE* begin to change. These changes are not a result of a list of rules and regulations, but rather a response to the love of a God that we experience when we draw close to Him.

When the people around Zacchaeus called him a "notorious sinner" (verse 7), Jesus called him a "son" (verse 9). Within just a few hours of Jesus beckoning Zacchaeus to come down from the tree, he had already given half of his possessions to the poor and paid back anyone he had cheated with quadruple interest! Nobody told him to do this. Nobody had to. A child reflects the image of the father. The closer we get to Him, the clearer we will begin to reflect Him in our lives.

Up in the tree, Zacchaeus was labeled a "notorious sinner." But Jesus saw his potential, embraced him as His son, and called him up to a new label as a generous philanthropist.

When we step into our true identity everything changes. Our identity can't be discovered from a distance. We have to draw close to Jesus, because the closer we get to the Father the closer we get to becoming who we were created to be.



## Dig Deeper:

*Take some time today to read what God says about you. If a verse stands out to you, put it on a sticky note and place it somewhere you can see it often.*

1. You are **chosen**. Ephesians 1:4, John 15:16
2. You are **valuable**. Isaiah 43:4
3. You are a **new creation**. 2 Corinthians 5:17
4. You are **strong and courageous**. 2 Timothy 1:7, Psalm 68:35
5. You are **forgiven**. Colossians 1:13-14, Ephesians 1:7-8
6. You are **dearly loved**. Jeremiah 31:3, Colossians 3:12

*"My sheep hear my voice." John 10:27*

One reason we must take steps to move closer to Jesus is because the Holy Spirit often speaks in a gentle whisper.

One thing not many people know about me is that I'm completely deaf in my left ear. This would explain why I may not laugh at your jokes. The truth is, I don't even know how many punchlines I've missed, important instructions I didn't know to follow, or even worse, how many people I've unintentionally ignored. Hearing doesn't come easy to me, so I have to work at it. I've learned there are a few things I have to do so I don't miss the moment.

- 1. Getting in the right space is everything!** I'll do whatever it takes to get the left corner seat whenever I go out to eat with friends. I'll practically take someone out to get the seat where I can be in the best position to hear the conversation.
- 2. Proximity is key.** The closer I get, the more clearly I hear. This can be awkward, and I have been known to invade people's personal space just so I don't miss the opportunity to get to know them better.
- 3. Noisy spaces are impossible.** Being in a crowded room is torture for this extrovert to have so many amazing people around but not be able to carry on a conversation (it's time for the blank stares and possible inappropriate laughter).
- 4. I always have someone covering my deaf side.** I have great friends and a husband who will walk on my left side so I don't unintentionally ignore someone or miss out on what's going on around me.

These lessons have served me well, not only physically but spiritually. Having hearing loss is a daily reminder of how intentional we must be if we're going to hear God's voice.

The Holy Spirit often speaks in a whisper. To hear Him, we need to do whatever it takes to get ourselves in the position where He can speak to us through His Word. And the closer we get to Him, the clearer His voice becomes. We all suffer from spiritual deafness from time to time, so we need spiritually mature people in our lives to echo God's voice so we don't miss out on what He has to say to us.

In every new season you walk into, God is waiting to lead you and speak to you. He speaks through His Word, the whisper of The Holy Spirit, and the wisdom He brings through His people.

Do you have wise friends who can cover your "deaf side?" What do you



need to do to put yourself in position to hear His Word and the whisper of His Spirit?

We'll never flourish if we can't hear the voice that's guiding our growth.

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on John 10:25-30.*

1. Where do you need to turn down the noise in your life so you can better hear the Holy Spirit?
2. Where do you need God to speak to you? Spend some time in prayer and journal what you believe He's whispering to you.
3. How can you better position yourself to hear from God as you go through this study?



DAY  
8

# Miracle Grow

Verses  
for Today

*Proverbs 27:6*  
*Proverbs 27:17*  
*Proverbs 13:20*

Have you ever seen the before and after pictures in the advertisements for “Miracle-Gro?” On the left side, you would see a scrawny, underdeveloped weak stem with a few leaves. On the right, a beautiful robust bush teeming with blooms after being spritzed with their product.

Being in consistent community with other Christ followers is like “Miracle-Gro” for our potential. We *all* need encouragement. We all need people to help us discern the whisper of God in the midst of our noisy culture. We also need loving people around us to speak truth into our lives and have difficult conversations when we get off track.

Accountability is an absolute necessity if we’re going to grow and flourish.

I know—accountability doesn’t sound like a very fun word, but it’s a powerful one and it has the power to strengthen you and keep you from harm.

Accountability is giving someone permission to help you keep the commitments you’ve made. Think about it, we’re all just *better* when someone is watching. When I take a run around my neighborhood, I’m usually slumped over at a snail’s pace. But, when I see a car rounding the corner, or my neighbor looking out her window, my posture straightens, I smile, and pick up the pace (embarrassing, but true).

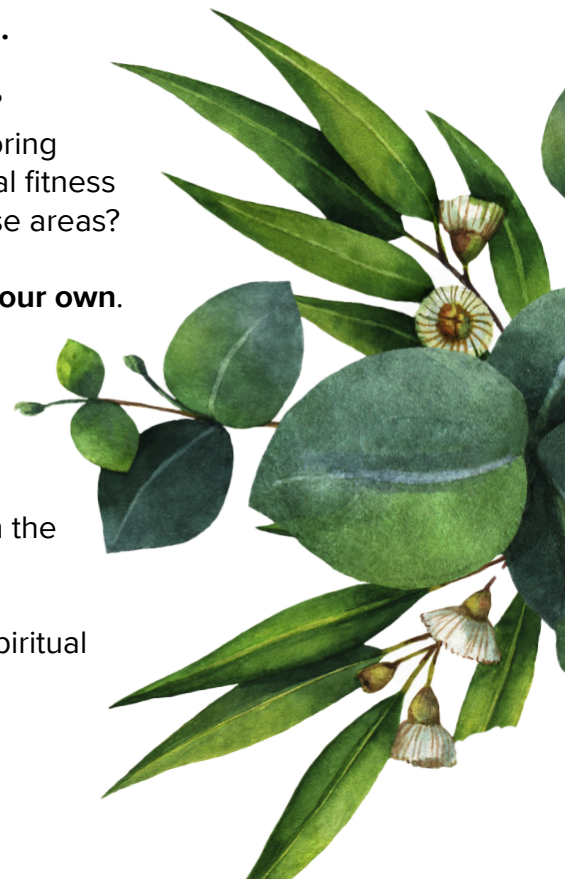
**Accountability will help us DO things we may not do on our own.**

Is there something you know you need to do to grow in your faith? Be more consistent in prayer and study the Word? Cultivate mentoring relationships? Use your gifts to serve others? Improve your physical fitness and health? Who can you ask to help you build consistency in these areas?

**Accountability also helps us NOT do things we may do if left on our own.**

Is there something in your life that’s keeping you from all God has for you? A relationship you know isn’t the best, but you don’t feel strong enough to walk away? A destructive habit or addiction? Comparison? Unforgiveness? Gossip? Being in a small group of godly friends and having trusted mentors will allow you to draw on the strength of *others* so God can strengthen *you*.

Inviting people in and remaining teachable will be like activating spiritual “Miracle-Gro” in your life. It’s like a fast-track to flourishing.



## Dig Deeper:

*Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11, Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, and Proverbs 19:20.*

1. Do you have someone in your life who helps keep you accountable to the commitment you've made to God and others? Who is it? If not, why? Make a list of a few people who you could ask to hold you accountable.
2. Is there a specific challenge or goal that you need accountability on right now? Who could help you with that? (I'm a believer in having many mentors. It's great to have mentors for any area that you want to GROW in.)

DAY  
9

# Free To Flourish

Verse  
for Today  
*John 8:31-32*

*“Our lives move in the direction of our strongest thoughts.”*

That’s a powerful truth worth repeating!

Scientists say we have approximately 8,000 thoughts each day. (If you’re a mother, I would assume that number is closer to 32,000.) If I were to look at my strongest thoughts (those conversations I have with myself) I have to admit I wouldn’t want those thoughts to determine the trajectory of my life.

At times frustration gets the best of me, and those closest to me see the worst in me. In those moments, it’s easy to feel like a failure as a boss, friend, and wife. It’s only a matter of time before my actions and responses follow my inner monologue. Before I know it, negative thoughts start taking over, shaping my attitude, leaving me feeling defensive and defeated.

I find that I’m most gullible to begin believing lies about myself in these moments of failure and weakness. Do any of these sound familiar?

*“You’re such a disappointment to people around you.”*

*“You’ll never be good enough.”*

*“If people knew how you really are, you would have no friends.”*

Or maybe in a moment of weakness you’ve believed the lie that you’ll never overcome that addiction or bad habit, you’re not strong enough to change, or that you’re all alone.

These lies can become strongholds in our minds (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). The word stronghold is from the Greek word “akamoro” and it means “a prisoner locked by deception.” We’ve been deceived when we believe something that isn’t true about ourselves and that’s dangerous because the story we tell ourselves is the life we will live. It’s impossible to walk in freedom when you’re chained to lies.

We have the power to transform our thinking though (Romans 12:2). We don’t have to be held captive by our thoughts. In fact, we’re called to take our thoughts captive (2 Corinthians 10:5).

The only way to knock down these strongholds is to replace the lies with the truth from God’s Word. You can’t *erase* a thought, but you can *replace* a thought.



Thoughts are like seeds—what we give the most energy to grows. His Word has the power to change the way you think and when you change the way you think, you change the way you live. Remember, the truest thing about you is what God says about you. When our thoughts are transformed by truth we're free to flourish.

## Dig Deeper:

*We can't erase a thought, but we can replace a thought. Spend some time replacing lies you've been tempted to believe with truth today.*

1. (Lie) I've made too many mistakes. → (Truth) Romans 8:1
2. (Lie) God wouldn't choose me. → (Truth) John 15:16
3. (Lie) I can't connect with God. → (Truth) Hebrews 4:16
4. (Lie) I'm all alone. → (Truth) Matthew 28:20
5. (Lie) I don't have a place in God's house. → (Truth) 1 Corinthians 12:27

A few years ago, some of my girlfriends came to me with a brilliant idea. They invited me to run the Princess Half Marathon at Disney World with them. We could raise awareness and funds for human trafficking (a cause I'm passionate about) and have a great time together. It sounded great. I was all in.

There was only one small problem; not only had I never run a half marathon, but I had never run to the end of my driveway.

But I was a woman of my word, so I was going to make this happen. As the race date began to draw near, Todd would ask me if I was going to train. I felt a little harassed and assured him that I had it all under control.

Well, time slipped by and the day before the race, I decided I better make my preparations. I bought a super cute outfit, some new shoes, and I was on my way (because a pair of new shoes fixes just about anything).

As we lined up in the early morning of the race, the Disney music played, the fireworks exploded, and I thought for a moment that I may possibly pull this thing off. I was going to give it my all and TRY my best!

Well, the pixie dust wore off at mile marker number 8 (my personal best). That's when the big orange "bus of shame" picked me up and drove me across the finish line.

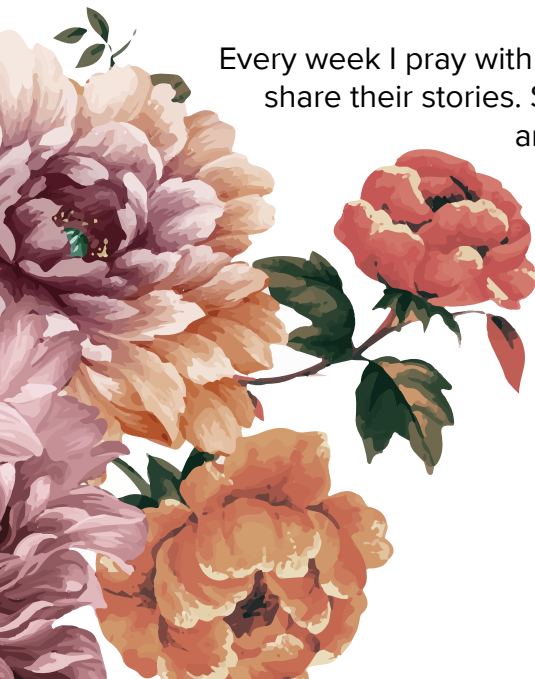
You see, all the TRYING in the world couldn't have carried me through to the finish, but all my friends who TRAINED for the race crossed the line together. *Trying* is no match for training.

Every week I pray with people after our church services and my heart breaks when they share their stories. Stories of addictions, broken relationships, and unhealthy habits that are keeping them buried—their breakthrough just out of reach.

The one sentence I hear from people the most is, "I am *trying* so hard to stop... stop drinking, stop partying, stop losing my patience, etc."

Spiritual exhaustion has set in because of all the TRYING. What I usually tell them is this:

STOP TRYING!



That's right. Stop trying and start training!

Sister, as we enter the last half of this study together I don't want you burned out from straining and striving to grow. I want you steady and strong because your growth is a natural result of your spiritual disciplines.

When we pray, read our Bibles, fast, connect with community, and worship we're building the spiritual muscles we need to walk in supernatural strength and power.

What habit or addiction is keeping you from walking in all God has for you? Stop trying, start training, and start relying on the Holy Spirit by plugging into the power source through spiritual practices.

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on Hebrews 12:11 and Galatians 6:9.*

1. What is God speaking to you through these verses?
2. Where have you been trying but struggling? What practical steps can you take this week to start training instead?
3. Effective training requires consistency. What area of your life do you need consistency in right now (Bible study, prayer, community, healthy living, etc.)?

DAY  
11

# Protect Your Soil

Verse  
for Today  
*Proverbs 4:23*

One of the main reasons our spiritual growth is more about training and less about trying is because flourishing is an inside-out job. It begins in the heart.

The heart is where God does His greatest work. He saved us when we gave our *hearts* to Him. His Word tells us we will find Him when we seek Him with our whole heart (Deuteronomy 4:29); that Christ Himself dwells in our hearts (Ephesians 3:17); and even though everyone else may look at outward appearances, God looks at our HEART (1 Samuel 16:7).

Our hearts are the epicenter of our relationship with God and with others. The epicenter must be guarded and protected, “...for everything you do flows from it” and GROWS from it. In the same way we protect our valued possessions by locking our car doors, buying home alarm systems, and placing our babies in car seats, guarding your heart requires great intentionality.

Two words come to mind when I think about guarding our hearts so they can flourish: CULTIVATE and ELIMINATE.

To protect our hearts, we must fill our lives with the relationships and activities that will CULTIVATE a healthy relationship with Jesus. Spending time in worship, reading and meditating on God’s Word, praying, and spending time with mentors are just a few examples.

We must also radically ELIMINATE and weed out the things that distract us from our purpose. Left unguarded, seeds of bitterness, comparison, envy, or unforgiveness can take root in the heart and grow into weeds that will choke the life and joy out of your relationship with God and the people He has placed in your life.

Think of it as having an “offensive” and “defensive” strategy. Cultivating a healthy relationship with Jesus is a way we can go on the “offense” to guard our hearts. Eliminating distractions is a “defense” strategy we can use to guard our hearts. In order to win, you can’t just exercise one. You need both.

As you begin implementing new spiritual habits, don’t lose sight of what Jesus is after in the process. Habits like prayer, forgiveness, tithing, and studying God’s Word are a means to an end. It’s about us getting more



of Jesus and Jesus getting more of us so He can shape our hearts to become like His.

This isn't easy work, sister. But it's worth it because a healthy soul begins with healthy soil.

## Dig Deeper:

*Read Psalm 51:10, Proverbs 4:20-27, and Proverbs 23:26.*

1. How would you describe the condition of your heart right now?
2. Write down three things you need to begin cultivating.
3. Write down three things you need to eliminate so you can experience more growth?



Verses  
for Today*Matthew 13:1-9*  
*Matthew 13:18-23*

Have you ever thought about how two people can hear the exact same sermon but leave with completely different results? One finds freedom while the other forgets the message before lunch is over.

Jesus shared the answer to this question in The Parable Of The Four Soils. The story is about a farmer who spreads seed across four different types of soil, and as a result, experienced four different outcomes. The seed was the *same*, but the soil was *different*, and that difference changed *everything*.

The seed represents God's Word. The four soils represent four different types of people or different attitudes within our own hearts. I've found that I've been able to identify with each of these soils during different seasons of my own life.

The first soil mentioned in this parable wasn't really soil at all. Jesus said the seed was thrown onto the road, which was hard ground. You don't have to have a green thumb to know that flowers won't grow on concrete. Since the seed had nowhere to go, it had nowhere to grow. This is what we're like when our hearts are hardened by negative feelings like bitterness and unforgiveness.

The second soil was shallow and nothing of substance can grow in a shallow place. Remember when we read Jeremiah 17:7-8 on Day 1 and we learned that flourishing is all about reaching *deep*? The seed planted on this ground sprang up quickly, but because it wasn't rooted deep enough it got scorched by the sun, which represents the trials and problems we face. Faith that withers in the face of adversity lacks depth. So next time you feel like you're being tested, take heart. This isn't the time to give up, but to go deep and GROW up!

Jesus mentioned a third kind of soil filled with thorns and weeds, which represent worries, distractions, and desires for lesser things. In the same way a weed can crush a seed, worries and distractions can kill your calling. How many times have we heard God's Word, but then immediately forgot it because we got distracted? The average person gets interrupted every eight minutes (if you're a mom, make that four minutes), so this is something we *all* struggle with. God plants things in us like joy, peace, and hope. But our enemy's strategy is to simultaneously plant seeds like jealousy, bitterness, and anxiety—and if we're not paying attention to our thoughts, we'll end up watering the wrong seeds.



Jesus wrapped up this parable by explaining one final type of soil, which He described as “good ground.” He said the seed that fell on good ground produced a harvest beyond anybody’s wildest dreams—producing in some cases 30, 60, and 100 times *more* than what was sown. This is the heart that not only hears God’s Word, but holds on to it and applies it. This is the picture of flourishing!

Becoming “good ground” is hard work, but healthy soil brings forth a harvest so it’s worth fighting for. If you’ve ever had a garden, you know it requires pulling weeds regularly. And the thing about pulling weeds is you can’t do it from your feet. You’ve got to get down on your knees and pull them up from the root if you want to make room for something beautiful to grow. The same is true in our spiritual lives. If you want healthy soil then you must regularly assume the posture of prayer and humility.

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23. Ask God to show you what the soil of your heart currently looks like.*

1. What soil best describes your heart right now?
2. What do you need to do to become “good ground” in this season? (e.g., *eliminate distractions, extend forgiveness, engage in community, etc.*)

DAY  
13

# The Fertilizer Of Forgiveness

Verses  
for Today

*Colossians 3:12-14*  
*Ephesians 4:31-32*

If we don't diligently tend to the soil of our hearts then weeds, thorns, and rocks inevitably form over time. Hurts and offenses we've left unaddressed eventually solidify and suppress our strength.

I remember one weekend after my husband, Todd, preached a powerful message on forgiveness, a young girl came to the front of the church and waited to speak to me. As I listened to her, I could immediately tell she was full of amazing promise and limitless potential. But her story was also full of pain and brokenness. She told me how her dad had recently abandoned her, her mother, and three siblings. They were heartbroken and hurting financially since her dad refused to support them as he was supporting his new girlfriend.

She asked me a question I'll never forget—"What if I don't want to forgive my father?" As I looked down at her hands in mine, I had an experience I've never had before. I could actually see handcuffs on her wrists, and I felt as if God was showing me that this unforgiveness had the potential to handcuff her—to keep her from flourishing.

See, in that moment what I *wanted* to tell her was it was probably too soon to forgive (and what I *wanted* to say about her dad wouldn't be appropriate for a Bible study). But she didn't need MY words, she needed THE WORD. My words didn't have the power to release her from her pain, but His Word was the key that could unlock the handcuffs holding her hostage. His Word could lead her into freedom, but the path there required forgiveness.

Scripture has a lot to say about forgiveness. God knew we needed to be good at this because unforgiveness has the ability to keep us from the fruitful life He has for us. Many times in Scripture we see God's forgiveness of us and our forgiveness of others can't be separated. "Forgive as the Lord forgave you." (Colossians 3:13).

How has God forgiven you and me? Completely (1 John 1:19), readily (Psalm 86), and compassionately (James 5:11). I know—He set the bar *really* high for us.

I would never want to minimize the pain you've experienced. Forgiving the unforgivable is an act of courage that can only be done through the power of the Holy Spirit. You may ask yourself, "How can I even begin to forgive?"

I believe that sometimes the first step is understanding what forgiveness is NOT.



- 1. FORGIVENESS IS NOT AN EXCUSE FOR SOMEONE ELSE'S BAD BEHAVIOR.** When you forgive someone you're not condoning their behavior. You're actually acknowledging it wasn't okay, but because you have the Holy Spirit within you, you can do something you couldn't otherwise do on your own.
- 2. FORGIVENESS IS NOT A FEELING.** If you wait until you feel like forgiving someone, you'll never do it. Forgiveness is a choice to participate in the supernatural through the power of the Holy Spirit. It's a choice to cultivate the soil of your heart.
- 3. FORGIVENESS IS NOT TRUST.** Forgiveness is a choice we can make in a moment, but trust is built over time. If you're in a relationship where trust has been broken, honesty and consistency will be the currency to rebuild trust.

I believe "unforgiveness is the poison we drink expecting somebody else to die." It's a thief sent to rob us of the full, abundant, John 10:10 life Jesus came to give us. Don't let the rock of unforgiveness rob you—let forgiveness be the fertilizer that fuels your growth.

Rocks and roots can't occupy the same space in your soil. One has to go to make room for the other. Which one will it be for you, sister?

**NOTE:** *There are times when an abuse has taken place and it will take a supernatural amount of courage and surrender to forgive the one who hurt you. (My heart goes out to you right now, as I stop to pray for those who will read these words.) You don't have to trust a person who has violated you. Forgiveness and trust are not the same thing. You can walk in forgiveness AND live in the freedom that comes with healthy boundaries.*

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on Colossians 3:12-17.*

1. What is this verse trying to communicate? Make some notes about it.
2. Is there anything you need to forgive yourself for? How does it help you to know God already forgives you?
3. Is there someone you need to forgive today so you can start walking in freedom? Remember, forgiveness isn't a feeling.

DAY  
14

# The Sneaky Weed Of Comparison

Verses  
for Today

2 Corinthians 10:12

Matthew 13:22

Proverbs 14:30

I recently read a report that said the average person has five social media accounts and spends nearly two hours a day browsing these sites. We live in an age where we're more connected than ever to people around the world. Social media comes with amazing benefits and opportunities but the endless barrage of everyone else's filtered photos can leave us feeling like we don't measure up. It's almost impossible to stay connected to the world around us without falling into the temptation to compare ourselves with other people.

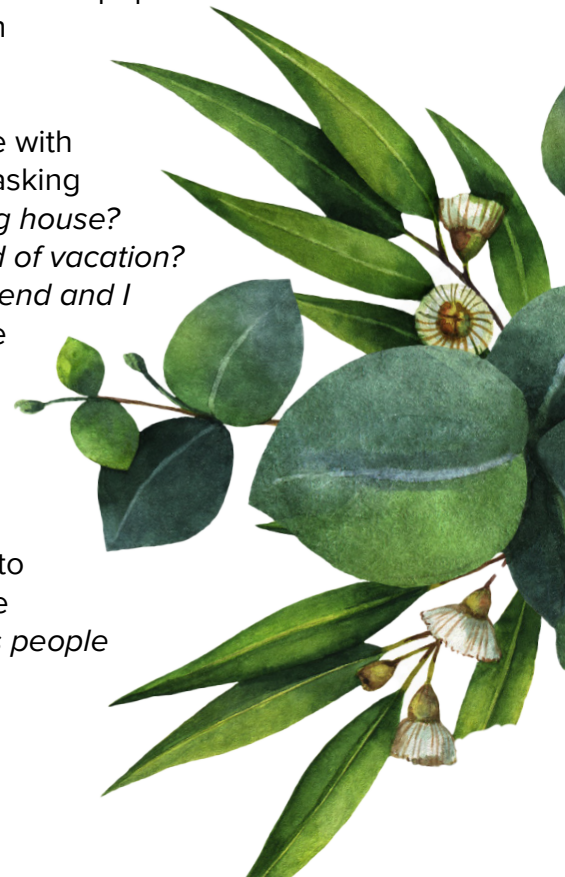
Comparison can easily become a weed in our lives. Weeds kill healthy plants by consuming the energy and space intended for the good seed.

**Comparison kills our confidence.** When we attempt to measure our success to someone else's highlight reel or culture's standards, we're often left with the lie that we'll never be good enough, smart enough, or \_\_\_\_\_ enough (fill in the blank with the lie of the week).

**Comparison kills our contentment** and leaves us unsatisfied. It's so easy to become consumed with the latest fashion, entertainment, or home décor trends until we ultimately become dissatisfied (or even envious of what we see others enjoying). This is usually when we find ourselves spending money we don't have to buy things we don't need—only to find this (temporary) satisfaction disappears as soon as the next “must have” item pops up on an influencer's profile. The cycle is unending (not to mention exhausting).

**Comparison also kills gratitude.** When we compare what we have with the blessings of others, it's only a matter of time before we begin asking “unfruitful” questions. *Why have they been blessed with such a big house? How did they get ahead financially? How can they afford that kind of vacation? Why can't I have a marriage like that? How come she has a boyfriend and I don't?* When we ask these questions, we're actually neglecting the soil of our own hearts, by not tending to the seeds of blessing God has planted in our lives. He wants to bless you in every area of your life, and the blessings begin by cultivating thankfulness for the MANY ways He provides for you.

Most importantly, **comparison kills relationships!** When we begin to ask those “unfruitful questions,” it's only a matter of time before we come up with our own answers. *“They must really want to impress people*



*with a house like that. I would have a happy marriage too if my husband paid that much attention to me.”* Before we know it, we become critical of others or compare our relationship with an unrealistic ideal. Comparison leads to criticism and criticism sucks all the joy and intimacy out of relationships, leaving them lifeless.

One of the most effective ways I’ve found to kill the weed that kills relationships, is to look for ways to intentionally affirm and celebrate the people in our lives—*especially when* they achieve something we aspire to or receive a blessing that maybe we hoped for. There’s power in our celebration! Celebration and affirmation weed out our own selfishness while nourishing our relationships.

In order to cultivate “good soil” so we become “good ground” we must be intentional about doing the hard work of pulling out the weed of comparison.

Who can you celebrate and speak affirmation over today?

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on Galatians 6:4-5.*

1. Who do you tend to compare yourself to? Is there an area of your life you’re most likely to compare (work, relationships, abilities, parenting)? Why do you think you’re dissatisfied in this area?
2. Comparison never leads to anything fruitful. When we compare, we either end up on top dealing with pride or with inferiority because we don’t measure up. Both are deceptions. What area do you find yourself in when it comes to comparison?
3. Practice being grateful today by listing ten things you’re thankful for.

Verses  
for Today*Matthew 16:13-19**Proverbs 18:21**Ephesians 4:29*

Peter was a young man who didn't always get things right. If he were graduating from a local Christian high school, he may have been voted "least likely to become a pastor." He was hot-headed, impatient, and became violent under stress. (Chopping off ears would definitely be a stopper in our pastoral hiring process!)

But where others saw an unstable man, Jesus saw a "rock." And Jesus didn't just see who Peter was—He *spoke* to who Peter would become. Jesus looked at His disciple who cut off a man's ear and said, "You're still called to feed My sheep." He spoke to the disciple who denied Him in His darkest hour and said, "I would like you to deliver the sermon that will turn the world upside down."

In the aftermath of Peter's greatest mistakes, Jesus spoke *life* over him and as a result, Peter went on to preach at Pentecost where thousands were saved.

Words and labels can shape destinies. They can be the water that causes our potential to grow or the wounds that cause us to shrink back from our calling.

Approximately 16,000 words come out of our mouths each day (If you're an introvert, maybe divide that by two). That's thousands of opportunities to encourage, nourish, prophesy, comfort, and help those around us—just by talking.

I remember when my son Jefferson was just twelve years old and began playing the guitar. His chubby fingers had a difficult time navigating the chords and songs he wanted to play. The early days were a bit excruciating from a listener's perspective as he practiced for hours on end. However, before Jefferson ever stepped on a platform at church or even knew how to play a tune in its entirety, his teacher, Danny, spoke destiny-shaping words over his life. He said, "Jefferson, you **ARE** a worship leader." Jefferson spent the next several years stepping into these words. Whether he's worshiping in his bedroom with his guitar all alone or on a platform, he does so with his whole heart, and I believe it's largely because of the words spoken over him as a 12-year-old boy.

Our words are so powerful—both the ones we speak over others and the ones we speak over ourselves. They can develop or destroy the work God is doing within us.

Let's commit to tuning our ear to the Holy Spirit's whisper so we can echo His words and unleash our kingdom potential.



## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on Proverbs 12:18, Proverbs 15:4, and Proverbs 16:24.*

1. What are the words you say or think most often about yourself? Do these words align with what God says about you? (Revisit Day 6 if you need a reminder of the way your Father views you.)
2. Think of someone close to you. What life-giving, destiny-changing words can you speak today that will unleash the kingdom potential in them?



*“WILL YOU HELP ME FIND THE TICKET?”*

Those are the seven words I'll never forget. They were the words of the very first argument my husband, Todd, and I ever had.

We were exiting the parking garage, on our honeymoon, and I was doing what any new bride would be doing in that moment... I was primping in the mirror to be sure my lips were kissable. I was completely unaware of Todd frantically searching for the parking ticket, as a line of traffic began to honk behind us. The voice that came out of my new husband had a guttural, demonic tone. He remembers the story a little differently, but both of us remember the next few hours of deafening silence.

I was naive enough to think if I was in the right place (on my honeymoon), with the right person (the love of my life), doing the right things (hmmmm), that conflict didn't have to be a part of our relationship. I believed it could be avoided. And for the first few years of our marriage, I went to great lengths to ignore, avoid, and flee any argument or conflict. In my mind, I had convinced myself I was an amazing peacemaker, but in reality, I was a peace faker. I faked peace by stuffing my emotions down deep and then I would withhold my affirmation and affection. I avoided conversations where differences of opinion could be shared in a safe and respectful environment.

I didn't realize I was robbing our relationship of the growth and intimacy that loving, redemptive conversations produce. In my mind, conflict felt like the enemy and the opposite of peace. However, I've learned that **conflict isn't the opposite of peace, it's the opportunity for peace.** When I ran away from the conflict, I ran away from my opportunity for peace to reign in our relationship.

Throughout Scripture we see wherever there's conflict or division, God ALWAYS moves in that direction to restore the broken relationship. When Adam and Eve sinned in the garden, the pure relationship with God was broken. But what did God do? He made the first move by searching for them, clothing them, and then providing a new covenant so the relationship could be restored. He did the same for me. When I was far from Him, living my own way, His Spirit drew me into a love I didn't deserve.

When we pursue peace and move in the direction of restoration, Scripture says we'll be called children of God. Why? Because people will recognize the resemblance. God's name is peace (Yahweh Shalom) and Jesus was called the Prince of Peace. We are



made in the image of God, and we never look more like our Father than when we're pursuing peace in a divided world.

Is there anyone in your life who you're in conflict with? Ask the Holy Spirit to help you know what steps to take to move toward restoration. What issues do you need to work *through* instead of working *around*?

Don't let the conflict you're facing (or avoiding) crush your growth—lean into it with love, grace, and wisdom and allow it to be a catalyst for flourishing.

## Dig Deeper:

*Read Matthew 5:23-24.*

1. Why do you think peace is so important to our heavenly Father?
2. Is there someone you've hurt or offended or maybe you "sense" that something is wrong in the relationship by their actions toward you? How can you work for reconciliation in that relationship?

DAY  
17

# The Fight To Flourish

Verse  
for Today  
*John 10:10*

I love full things. FULL things FILL things. A full tank of gas fills me with confidence that I'll get where I need to go. A full cup of coffee fills me with just the right amount of caffeine to help me be nice to my family each morning.

John 10:10 talks about the “full” life that Jesus came to give us. In this passage that word *full* means “the abundant, extraordinary, beyond-normal life.” When we’re living this *full* life, it *fills* our days with extraordinary Kingdom purpose. It *fills* our lives with healthy relationships, and it *fills* our hearts with a deep connection to our heavenly Father. This is the FLOURISHING life you were created for!

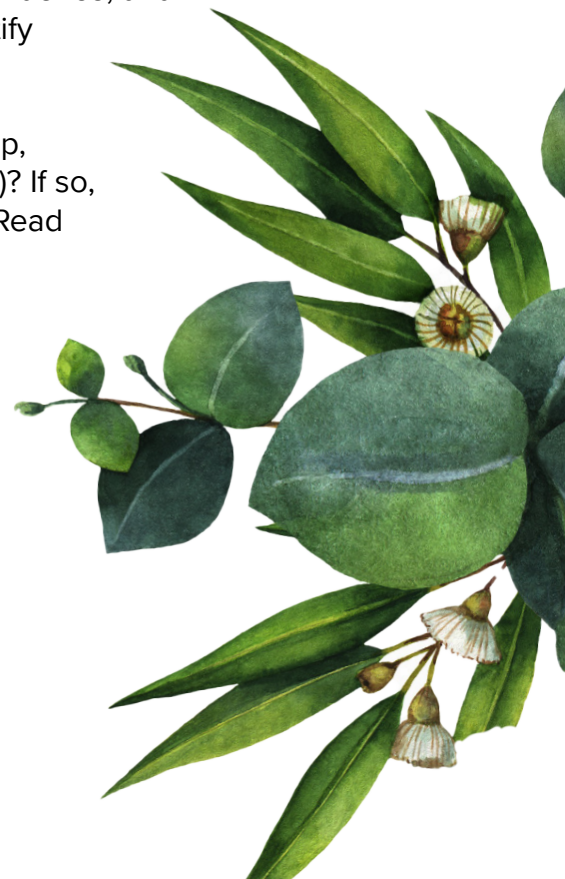
But this verse also comes with a warning about a thief (Satan) who will do all he can to rob you of the gifts Jesus came to give you. He works every day to empty you of the full life and his schemes aren’t easily seen with human eyes.

Perhaps it’s an app that’s draining you of your time or peace. Maybe it’s the unforgiveness you’re holding on to and now it has you handcuffed. Or maybe you’ve become comfortable with compromise and it’s robbing you of your potential. Most people I know who are far from God didn’t *run* away—they *drifted* away and compromise was their sailboat.

Satan is a robber and uses any “thief” he can to steal your joy, confidence, and spiritual vitality. Sometimes they’re hard to spot, but we must identify them so we can walk in all God has for us. Here are a few:

**Sin:** Is there any area of your life not in line with God’s Word (gossip, negativity, sexual relationship outside of marriage, dishonesty, etc.)? If so, you can ask for forgiveness today and begin to walk a new path. (Read John 1:9.)

**Distractions:** Time is one of our greatest gifts so we *know* the enemy is out to steal it. Corrie Ten Boom once wrote, “If the devil can’t make you bad, he’ll make you busy.” Your phone could be costing you a fortune because it’s robbing you of the one resource you can’t get back—*time*. We barely notice the ticking of the clock as we scroll through photos, videos, and headlines on our phone. Perhaps that’s why one of the most popular apps is called TikTok.



**Excuses:** It's easy for all of us to pretend we don't have problems and make excuses for behavior that's putting distance between us and God. It could be a short temper, unrealistic expectations, or laziness. It's easy to make excuses like "*this is just who I am*" or "*I can't help it*" but these personality challenges can hold us back from growing into who God has created us to be. Can you think of an aspect of your personality that you've been excusing rather than addressing?

The great news is God has given us spiritual eyes (Psalm 119:18, Ephesians 1:18) and He's equipped us with protection against our enemy. He's given us His Word as a light in the darkness (where the thief hangs out), the power of His Spirit to overcome his schemes, and a spiritual family to speak into our blind spots.

We've got to fight to flourish but we never fight alone. God is fighting *with* us and *for* us.

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on John 10:10.*

1. Ask someone close to you if they know of something that could hold you back from becoming all God has called you to be. (This is hard and humbling, but it's a key ingredient to flourishing.)
2. Where do you feel like the thief is robbing you right now? How can you reclaim your victory? (Read Romans 8:37 for encouragement—the win already belongs to you, sister!)

We've spent several days talking about our soil and working on our roots. Now, it's time to focus on the fruit!

As we learned in Day 3 of this study, one of the keys to flourishing is remaining with Jesus. Jesus told His disciples to remain with Him more than 10 times in John 15 because He knew that was the secret to producing fruit. The fruit He was referring to is the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23).

If they stayed connected to Jesus, they would be able to LOVE people with a supernatural love (and not just the people who looked and thought like them). They would experience deep JOY (even when life got hard) and they would have an unexplainable PEACE (despite unimaginable persecution).

But how could they stay "connected" when Jesus was leaving the earth? How do we stay connected to a person we can't see?

John 15 ends with the promise of the Holy Spirit and in Acts 2, we read about the fulfillment of that promise. The Holy Spirit was and is the power source that produces fruit in a believer's life. When our roots reach deep and we remain connected to our source of life, we actually produce fruit in the midst of pain and problems.

As we begin to explore what a fruitful life means and looks like, there are a few foundational truths we must remember.

1. **The Fruit of the Spirit is "produced" not manufactured.** I've never heard an orange tree grunting and groaning in an effort to produce an orange. An orange tree stays planted and rooted and relies on its lifesource to work through it. As a result, it produces great fruit. Fruitfulness is less about TRYING and more about RELYING on the Holy Spirit.
2. **The Fruit of the Spirit is a "process."** Before that orange became an orange, it was a seed. When we give our lives to Christ, the Fruit of the Spirit is planted in our hearts in the form of a seed that must be cultivated and cared for. Maturity is a process that doesn't happen overnight, but over time. Don't give up on yourself (or others). Check your "connection" regularly, give yourself grace as you grow, and celebrate those small wins (they add up).
3. **The Fruit of the Spirit is your "purpose."** The Fruit of the Spirit is a picture of God's character and you were created in God's image to be a reflection of Him. When God's Spirit



begins to fill us and flow through us we're stepping into our potential and walking in our purpose.

As you examine the Fruits of The Spirit and reflect on your current character, know that there will always be some qualities that come more naturally to us than others. However, we have the power within us to produce them all when we're surrendered to the Holy Spirit.

And the fruit that He grows within us is sure to nourish not only our souls, but those around us.

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on Galatians 5:22-23.*

1. How have you seen these characteristics demonstrated in your life?
2. What fruit do you sense that the Holy Spirit is working on you to produce?
3. Where are you *trying* to produce fruit rather than *relying* on the Holy Spirit's help? What would it look like for you to practically tap into your power source this week so you can be more productive? (e.g., listening to worship music to bring you joy, praying regularly so you experience more peace, etc.)

DAY  
19

# Participating In The Miraculous

Verses  
for Today

*John 2:1-11*  
*John 10:10*

Jesus came to give us a flourishing, fruitful, full life. God didn't intend for us to live limited to the laws of nature—that's why He invites us to participate in His supernatural work.

In every miracle throughout Scripture, we see a divine partnership between the natural and the supernatural, and most miracles came with a supporting cast.

The little boy brought his tiny lunch to help Jesus and the disciples feed thousands. Somebody had to carry the man on the mat to the pool of Bethesda. Four men carried their paralyzed friend to Jesus by lowering him through a roof to get to Jesus. Sick children were healed because their parents went to great lengths to find Jesus.

The miracle of Jesus turning water into wine had its own supporting cast. Mary, Jesus' mother, noticed a need, and cared enough to give Jesus a nudge so He would work things out on her friend's behalf. When her friends ran out of what they needed, she ran to Jesus.

There are people around us every day who have "run out." They've run out of love in their relationships. They've run out of confidence because they've been knocked down so many times. They've run out of faith because their prayers seem to have gone unanswered.

Jesus' first miracle happened because a woman *noticed* that somebody ran out of something. We'll never solve problems we don't see. I know it's so easy to get swept up in our own lives—our own families, problems, jobs, and to-do lists. But when we forget to look at those around us, there's a good chance we forfeit miracles.

The servants were also part of this miraculous supporting cast. Not only did they have a front row seat to the *first* miracle, but they obeyed Jesus' instructions and passed out what Jesus was serving. This is still what we're called to do today! Jesus is serving hope to the hopeless, peace to the anxious, and an abundant life to those who've been robbed by sin—and He wants to use YOU to do it.

When we open our eyes to the needs of those around us and tune our ears to the whisper of the Holy Spirit, we're positioning ourselves for miracles to flow *through* us. We're signing up to be a supporting cast member in someone else's story. And the result is a life marked by miracles—and miracles are markers of the flourishing life.



## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on John 2:1-11 and John 14:12-14.*

1. What “greater” works might Jesus be calling you to do?
2. Is there someone in your life who has a need that seems overwhelming to them? How can you stand with them today? Ask God to open your eyes to the needs around you.
3. What do you have that you could use to help someone else? Think about it and ask God today if there’s something you have that could be an answer to someone’s prayer.



DAY  
20

# The Power Of Perseverance

Verses  
for Today

*Matthew 13:23*  
*Galatians 6:9*

I wish I could tell you as we end this study that from now on flourishing will come easy for you. I wish I could tell you that after reading a 21-day Bible plan, flourishing will feel like second nature—that the work won't be difficult and you'll never get tired.

But sister, you and I both know that's not true. Growing into the women God has called us to be takes equal parts grace and grit. Cultivating good soil takes time. Maturing is a messy, never-ending process.

Pulling weeds can become exhausting, especially when you do all that hard work, only to find *another* weed waiting for you. Life can feel like one step forward and two steps back. In those moments when we fall short, it's easy to wonder *why bother?*

The process can be frustrating if our goal is to have the “perfect soil.” But our goal isn't *perfect*—it's *plantable*. There's no such thing as perfect dirt. Our lives, like the dirt, are messy; but God has a way of taking our messes and making something new with them.

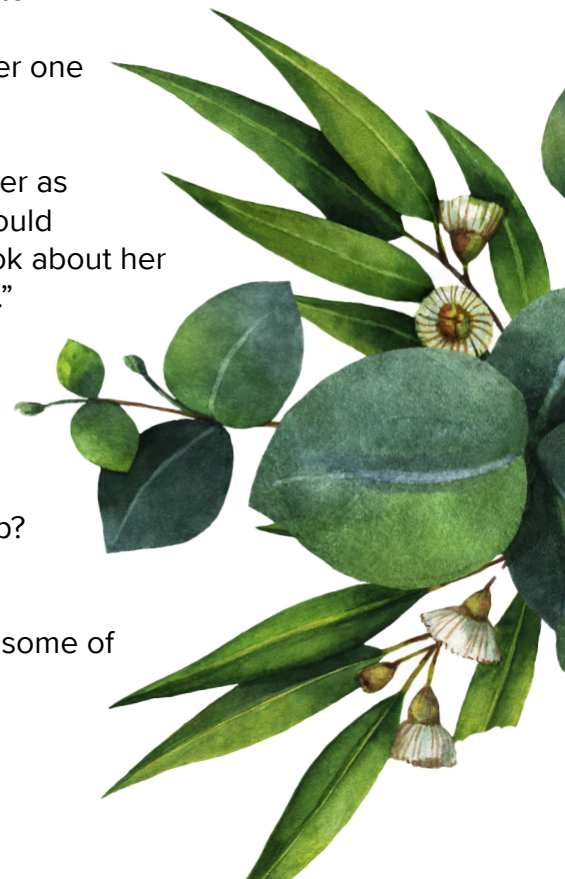
In 2008, Heather Dorniden, a runner at the University of Minnesota was competing for the championship title in the 200 meter run at the Big 10 National Championships. As she rounded a corner, another runner clipped her heels and she fell flat on the hard pavement and appeared to be seriously injured. It looked as if her race was over. However, to everyone's surprise she instantly popped up—and with thousands cheering her on—she not only finished, but she passed each runner one by one and miraculously crossed the line as the winner!

She went on to become a YouTube sensation and launched a career as a motivational speaker. She never thought that “just getting up” would result in a future flourishing career. She has gone on to write a book about her experience, and in her own words all she did that day was “get up.”

Just getting up (and not giving up) will open *more* possibilities than you ever dreamed possible.

When life gets hard—when you feel like you're being buried alive and you're fighting to flourish—will you commit to simply getting up? Sometimes the most powerful thing you can do is keep going.

Perseverance (not perfection) creates fertile ground for God to do some of His most powerful work.



When we refuse to stay down, God can take our mistakes, pain, and weaknesses and use them as Miracle-Gro for our future. When we hang on to hope, despite hardships, we can trust that a harvest is coming. But tomorrow's harvest hinges on today's commitment and consistency—they're the "not-so-secret" secrets to flourishing in every season.

If we were having coffee together today, that's what I would tell you. *Don't give up. Stay consistent. Hold fast to your commitment. Good things are coming your way.*

## Dig Deeper:

*Meditate on Galatians 6:9.*

1. When was the last time you felt tempted to quit something you knew God had called you to? What did you do? How did it turn out?
2. Where do you feel weary, tired, or worn out right now? What does it look like for you to keep going (and keep growing)?

DAY  
21

# The Superbloom

Verse  
for Today  
*Isaiah 35:1-7a*

Death Valley is home to some of the hottest, driest, harshest conditions on the planet (hence, the name). And yet, it's home to one of the most vibrant explosions of flowers—a rare desert botanical phenomenon called the *superbloom*. A superbloom is called “super” because countless wildflowers bloom at exactly the same time, despite the unfriendly conditions.

This picture of bright flowers bursting forth in the barren desert reminds me of the Messianic prophecy found in Isaiah 35. It paints a detailed picture of what happened when Jesus showed up in history. It's the picture of a *spiritual superbloom*—of what happens when we let Jesus reign in our lives.

*“Even the wilderness and desert will rejoice in those days; the desert will blossom with flowers. Yes, there will be an abundance of flowers and singing and joy... The Lord will display His glory there, the splendor of our God.” Isaiah 35:1,2b*

When you stay rooted in God's Word and connected to Him through prayer, you can have a deep, supernatural joy even in the midst of sorrows. When you invite the power of The Holy Spirit to invade your “desert places,” He'll use the pain of your past to bring glory to Him and hope to others.

*“Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped.” Isaiah 35:5*

He wants to increase your capacity to see things the way He sees them—to see His children the way He sees them, so you can love them unconditionally, the way He loves them. It's also His desire to open your ears so He can speak to you, so you can echo His voice of hope to those around you.

*“The lame man will leap up like a deer, and those who could not speak will shout and sing.” Isaiah 35:6*

I love this part! When Jesus shows up, He transforms inabilities into abilities—then He takes it up a notch. When we're at our weakest, He not only gives us the strength to walk again, but He empowers us to “leap.” He doesn't just make us strong to barely survive, but to thrive. He helps us find our voice, not so we can whisper, but so we can shout and sing.

*“For water will gush in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; the parched ground will become a pool with springs of water in a thirsty land.” Isaiah 35:6b-7a*



Our God is so good He can give us what we need, even in a hard place. He can quench our thirst in the driest of deserts and nourish us in the valley. And as living water flows to us, it then flows through us for the benefit of those around us. And as they benefit from our faith and strength, they begin to bloom too. *This* is the superbloom! *This* is the flourishing life Jesus came to bring. He wants your relationships to blossom. He wants your career to bloom. He wants to turn every obstacle you face into an opportunity to show off His superbloom super power!

People from all around the world come to see the superbloom because, in theory, it *shouldn't* happen. Flowers *shouldn't* bloom in the desert. Sister, when you flourish in the middle of the fire and you remain steady through the storm, people will pay attention. They will pause to observe you in the same way people pull over to take pictures of the superbloom. They know they're witnessing something *special*—something *miraculous*.

My prayer is that you wouldn't settle for anything less than flourishing! *This* is your season to superbloom!

## Dig Deeper:

*Read through Isaiah 35 in a few different translations of the Bible.*

1. What are you believing God to do in this next season? In your relationships? In your personal life? In your sphere of influence?
2. Who comes to mind when you picture a superbloom (a woman who is flourishing)? Make time to catch up with her this week. Allow God to use her to mentor you, encourage you, and challenge you in your own growth.