*When Words Matter Most* by Cheryl Marshall & Caroline Newheiser

Women Walking Wisely 2022-2023

***Reflection Questions***

Chapter 1 (complete by September 26 meeting)

1. Who has been used in your life to point you to Christ and his word? What has this person taught you? How has she encouraged you?

2. How is counsel defined in this chapter? What should “speaking the truth in love” look like? (See Eph. 4:15, 29; Col. 1:28; 3:16; 1 Thess. 5:11, 14.)

3. In Ephesians 4:13, what three goals are given for your relationships within the body of Christ? Explain each of them in your own words, and if you haven’t already, answer the questions found in the “Three Goals” section of this chapter.

4. As you reflect on this chapter, what would you say to encourage a believer who feels alone in her walk with the Lord? What would you say to a believer who seems to be distancing herself from her church and other believers?

5. Do you know someone who’s struggling spiritually and needs a genuine Christian friend? In what ways can you be that person for her? How can you build her up with God’s word this coming week?

Chapter 2 (complete by October 24 meeting)

1. Read Galatians 6:1–4. What do these verses tell you about the who, how, and why of carrying one another’s burdens? How does this expand your understanding of how to love other believers?

2. In 1 Thessalonians 5:14, what are three common types of burdens people may carry? Explain in your own words how God wants you to respond to each of them.

3. Think of someone you know who’s burdened in one of the ways listed in 1 Thessalonians 5:14. What burden does she carry, and how can you specifically help carry that burden? What Scripture passages have been meaningful in your own life that you could share with her to help meet her spiritual need?

4. What is the greatest need of the unbeliever? What are some practical ways you can love her? Which of the three points about Jesus from the end of this chapter gives you courage to share God’s word with her, and why?

5. Spend some time praying for those you love who are unruly, fainthearted, weak, or unbelieving. Select one of the following prayers of Paul to guide your prayer: Ephesians 1:16–19 or Ephesians 3:14–19. Ask the Lord for wisdom and opportunities to share with them biblical truth that’s appropriate for their spiritual needs.

Chapter 3 (complete by November 28 meeting)

1. Read Ephesians 4:29–32 and list all the ways your speech can “give grace to those who hear,” according to these verses. Who in your life has spoken to you with grace, and how?

2. Have you personally experienced the saving grace of God? What does justification mean, and how is someone justified? How might understanding saving grace impact how you speak with others?

3. What is sanctification, and how does it differ from your initial salvation? How might understanding biblical sanctification impact how you speak with others?

4. What are the future graces that await all glorified believers in heaven? Which of these are the most meaningful to you, and why? How might your understanding of biblical glorification impact how you speak with others?

5. Read Titus 2:11–14 and list all that you learn about the grace of God. As you meditate on these verses, take a few minutes to thank God for his abundant grace toward you in Christ. Next, pray for someone you know who needs to be encouraged with a reminder of God’s grace in her life. What can you share with her from this chapter to strengthen her faith this week?

Chapter 4 (complete by January 30 meeting, along with chapter 5)

1. Do you have a gracious friend who displays Christlike love toward you? List some ways she’s loved you well. What qualities do you appreciate in her?

2. Love should “spill” from your life into the lives of others. Read John 13:34–35 and 1 John 4:15–21. In these verses, who is the source of that love? How is the believer’s relationship to Jesus described, and how does it impact others?

3. What three qualities of a gracious friend’s character are highlighted in this chapter? Describe them in your own words and with key Scripture verses. Which quality do you need to develop in your own life?

4. What three qualities of a gracious friend’s conversation are highlighted in this chapter? Describe them in your own words and with key Scripture verses. Which quality do you need to develop in your own life?

5. What three aspects of a gracious friend’s conduct are highlighted in this chapter? Describe them in your own words and with key Scripture verses. Which quality do you need to develop in your own life? 6. Read Philippians 2:1–11. In what ways has Christ been gracious to you? How does his example motivate you to be a gracious friend?

Chapter 5 (complete by January 30 meeting, along with chapter 4)

1. Read Psalm 141:5. When has another Christian spoken truth into your life such that you found it was difficult to hear at first, but later you realized it was for your good? What lessons did God teach you through that experience?

2. This chapter highlights how we should biblically respond to those who are withdrawn, angry, defensive, struggling, and rebellious. List the biblical ways to approach each of them as explained in this chapter, along with supporting Scripture verses.

3. Read about how Jesus responded to a Samaritan woman in John 4:1–26, a rich young man in Mark 10:17–22, his enemies in Luke 23:33–37, and Peter in John 21:15–19. What was Jesus’s attitude toward each of them? What were his main concerns for each? What does Jesus’s example teach you about how to respond when your grace toward others is tested?

4. Read 2 Corinthians 7:8–13 and 1 Thessalonians 2:5–9. How did Paul approach the Corinthians and the Thessalonians in their sin? What did their repentance look like?

5. Do you have a loved one who resembles one of the women in this chapter? What have you learned from this chapter about how to respond to her and to love her well? How will you specifically apply what you’ve learned to your conversations with her?

Chapter 6 (complete by February 27 meeting)

1. Read Psalm 19:7–11 and make two lists from this passage. First, list how Scripture is described. Second, list how Scripture transforms us. How has Scripture specifically transformed you?

2. What four attributes of Scripture are described in this chapter? Reread the Bible verses that support each of them and explain each attribute in your own words. What other attributes could be included?

3. What are the five ways Scripture works in believers, as discussed in this chapter? Which of these is the most meaningful to you and why? In what other ways can Scripture impact our lives?

4. Describe your current intake of God’s word. How can you increase your knowledge and understanding of Scripture? In addition to attending your church’s weekly worship service, consider attending an adult Sunday school class, joining a weekly Bible study, following a Bible reading plan, studying a book of the Bible, or memorizing and meditating on Scripture. Choose at least one of these to begin implementing in your life. Who can you invite to join you?

5. How has this chapter encouraged your confidence in God’s word to transform lives? Over this coming week, read all of Psalm 119 and notice the psalmist’s confidence in God’s word. How can confidence in God’s word change how you share it with others?

Chapter 7 (complete by March 27 meeting, along with chapter 8)

1. Spend time rereading and thoroughly familiarizing yourself with the scriptures and key points presented in this chapter.

2. Which of these Bible passages is the most meaningful to you and why? What does it teach you about God? What does it teach you about yourself? How might it impact what you believe or how you live?

3. Is there another Bible passage or verse that the Lord has used in your life to help you overcome worry? What truth have you personally learned from it that you could share with a worried friend?

4. Read Psalm 34. Underline five verses in this psalm that you think would be an encouragement to someone who is worried. Make your own notes about what those verses say about trusting God.

5. “Anxiety in a man’s heart weighs him down, but a good word makes him glad” (Prov. 12:25). Do you know someone who’s worried to whom you can give a “good word” this week? Pray for your friend, and whether it be in a conversation or a written note, share with her a relevant Scripture passage from this chapter. Encourage your friend with God’s truth in love.

Chapter 8 (complete by March 27 meeting, along with chapter 7)

1. Spend time rereading and thoroughly familiarizing yourself with the scriptures and key points presented in this chapter.

2. Which of these Bible passages is the most meaningful to you and why? What does it teach you about God? What does it teach you about yourself? How might it impact what you believe or how you live?

3. Is there another Bible passage or verse that the Lord has used in your own life to strengthen you in your weariness? What truth have you personally learned from it that you could share with a weary friend?

4. Read Psalm 71. Underline five verses in this psalm that you think would be an encouragement to someone who is weary. Make your own notes about what those verses say about trusting God.

5. First Thessalonians 5:11 reminds us to “encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.” Do you have a weary friend you can encourage this week? How can you love her in a practical way (such as babysitting, making a meal, or running errands)? Pray for your friend, and whether it be in a conversation or a written note, share with her a relevant Scripture passage from this chapter. Strengthen her with God’s truth in love.

Chapter 9 (complete by April 24 meeting, along with chapter 10)

1. Spend time rereading and thoroughly familiarizing yourself with the scriptures and key points presented in this chapter.

2. Which of these Bible passages is the most meaningful to you and why? What does it teach you about God? What does it teach you about yourself? How might it impact what you believe or how you live?

3. First Thessalonians 5:14 (NASB) tells us to “admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.” What other Bible verses or biblical examples can give you guidance as you admonish the unruly? What do your verses or examples teach about the attitude you should have when speaking with the unruly or wayward?

4. Read 2 Corinthians 2:14–17. Describe the analogy that is used in these verses to illustrate your influence on others. What are the two different ways people may respond to you as you represent the knowledge of Christ? What do you learn from these verses about how to call a friend to repentance?

5. James 5:19–20 says: “My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.” Do you know someone who is wandering away from the Lord? Pray for your friend and have a conversation with her that includes a relevant Scripture passage from this chapter. Gently admonish her with God’s truth in love.

Chapter 10 (complete by April 24 meeting, along with chapter 9)

1. Spend time rereading and thoroughly familiarizing yourself with the scriptures and key points presented in this chapter.

2. Which of these Bible passages is the most meaningful to you and why? What does it teach you about God? What does it teach you about yourself? How might it impact what you believe or how you live?

3. Is there another Bible passage or verse that the Lord has used in your own life to comfort you? What truth have you personally learned from it that you could share with a weeping friend?

4. Read Psalm 40. Underline five verses in this psalm that you think would be an encouragement to someone in sorrow. Make your own notes about what those verses say about the Lord and how he cares for his people.

5. Proverbs 15:23 says, “To make an apt answer is a joy to a man, and a word in season, how good it is!” Do you have a friend who’s enduring a season of weeping and needs a word of comfort? How can you love her in a practical way (such as sharing a meal, listening as she processes her grief, writing out encouraging Bible verses for her, walking together in a beautiful place)? Pray for your friend, and whether it be in a conversation or a written note, share with her a relevant Scripture passage from this chapter. Comfort her with God’s truth in love.

Chapter 11 (complete by May 22 meeting)

1. Read Exodus 2:23–4:20. Describe a time when you felt as Moses did in these verses. Explain your circumstances. What did you think and why? What did you do or not do as a result? Which of God’s answers to Moses give you confidence to apply what you have learned in this book?

2. Read 2 Corinthians 3:4–8 and 4:1–7. What do you see as your inadequacies as you consider sharing God’s word with those in need? Which of those inadequacies are too difficult for God to overcome? According to these verses, why was Paul so confident in his ministry to others?

3. Which chapter in this book did you find the most helpful to you? Explain why. What changes will you make in your conversations as a result of reading that chapter?

4. Explain what is meant by this statement: “Speaking truth with grace begins with receiving and knowing the grace of God in our own lives.” How would this statement apply to your own life? Are there aspects of your speech you believe need to change because of your knowledge and experience of God’s grace?

5. The final paragraph states: “In [Jesus’s] grand design, you’re also a builder.” Explain this analogy in your own words. What scriptures can be used to prove this point? Make a list of a few women you know who need spiritual encouragement and create a plan for how you will build them up with truth and grace.