



Women's Devotional eNewsletter | January 2019

Where Are You Looking?



In September 2013 I found myself unable to stand or walk by myself. The pain in my ears was so bad and the ringing in them seemed to increase daily. It was hard to think! I couldn't focus my eyes. I didn't do anything except lie on the sofa all day. As the days went by my fear and anxiety were growing. These symptoms had started before summer and grew worse. I thought I was dying of some strange disease! We had gone to many doctors, run many tests, and had a few diagnoses but nothing seemed to help. Spiritually and emotionally I was losing ground. Fear, depression, anger and confusion consumed me.

I had been a Christian for 34 years and there I was, doubting my God! I really couldn't believe the state I was in...what was happening? I questioned the purposes of trials in my life, His presence in my life and His love for me. Where was my faith? My life was not making sense and I felt awful! About that time, Anne Harrell, wife to our pastor Gary Harrell, gave me the devotional book "God's Inspirational Promises" by Max Lucado. As I was reading through it I came upon a day entitled "When You Suffer." Lucado's words cleared some of my confusion: *"There is a window in your heart through which you can see God. Once upon a time that window was clear. Your view of God was crisp. You could see God as vividly as you could see a gentle valley or hillside. Then, suddenly, the window cracked. A pebble broke the window. A pebble of pain. And suddenly God was not easy to see. The view that had been so crisp had changed. You were puzzled. God wouldn't allow something like this to happen, would He? When you can't see Him, trust Him...Jesus is closer than you've ever dreamed."*

I remember reading this like it was yesterday. Tears started rolling down my cheeks; words had just been put to my feelings. I felt a calm. That last sentence seemed to take the blinders off my heart and eyes. I slowly reread it - *"When you can't see Him, trust Him... Jesus is closer than you've ever dreamed."* I couldn't see Him because all I was looking at was my illness. I doubted Him because I wasn't looking to Him, and I had let lies push out truths that normally kept my relationship with my Heavenly Father healthy. I bowed my head and confessed my doubts and unbelief.

Here are a few of those truths that had been stolen by pain, which can serve as great reminders to us all:

- The truth that He loves us so much that Jesus died for us, even though we feel unlovable at times! Amen!

- The truth that God is with us always. “So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand”. ([Isa. 41:10](#) NIV)
- The truth that trials and discipline are for our good, that we may share in His Holiness ([Heb. 12:10](#), [James 1:2-4](#)).
- The truth that the Word of God is living and active ([Heb. 4:12](#)). It changes us.

Over the next three years I had many highs and lows, but I was once again reminded of God’s love and presence in my life. My husband and I knew the importance of God’s Word, so he would put the Bible on audio before he left for work in the mornings so I could hear and “see” Jesus afresh through His Word. That was a rich time while I was confined to the sofa. It’s easy to forget that the Word is supernatural. It is living and active and it changes hearts! I was looking to my Savior again!

About a year later I finally got a correct diagnosis of chronic vestibular migraines (migraines in the inner ear; more common than you think). I take medications daily that help prevent break-throughs. I’m very thankful God provided the doctors, medications and the progress. He has also provided family, friends, community and the Holy Spirit to remind me of His love, presence, purpose and Word! God is with me every step of the way even when I can’t see Him and He’s there with you too, even when you can’t see Him!

Reflect & Respond

- Is there something in your life that is blinding your view of God?
- Which one of the truths (His love, His presence, His purpose in trials, or the power of His Word) did you need to be reminded of today?
- Would you make your 2019 New Year’s Resolution to read from the Bible every day?
- (Suggestion: Start small and build on it...plan on finishing the New Testament in a year, instead of the whole Bible. The Gospel of Matthew has 28 chapters. Read one chapter a day and if you don’t, just read a few verses.)

Where Are You Looking? was written by Diane Matthews.

Diane's roots are in New Orleans, but she and her husband Hank are proud to be Razorbacks! Their children are Joshua, Courtney, David, Daniel and 2 newer additions, Taylor (Joshua’s wife) and Jenna (David’s wife). Members of Fellowship for over 30 years, Diane counts it a privilege to spend time getting to know women of all ages and find out their “stories.” She serves with the Women’s Ministry Team, Discipleship Team, and as a Women's Shepherd at Fellowship Fayetteville. Her vocations are teaching and art, but her heart’s desire is seeing God move in the hearts and minds of women. Diane’s favorite activity is spending time with family!

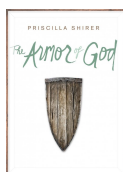


Past issues: Fayetteville Women's Devotional eNewsletter

Spring Studies Start January 22!

[REGISTER HERE](#)

Childcare is available during both the morning and evening sessions!



The Armor of God

Tuesdays | Jan 22 - Apr 30

Mornings 9:00am-11:00am or Evenings 6:30pm - 8:30pm

All day, every day, an invisible war rages around you - unseen, unheard, yet felt throughout every aspect of your life. A devoted, devilish enemy seeks to

wreak havoc on everything that matters to you: your heart, your mind, your marriage, your children, your relationships, your resilience, your dreams, your destiny. But his battle plan depends on catching you unaware and unarmed. If you're tired of being pushed around and caught with your guard down, this study is for you. The enemy always fails miserably when he meets a woman dressed for the occasion. *The Armor of God* by Priscilla Shirer is more than merely a Biblical description of the believer's inventory. It is an action plan for putting it on and developing a personalized strategy to secure victory.

Living Beyond Yourself

This Beth Moore study is a continuation from fall for the Vintage Gals, but new women are invited to jump in for the remaining weeks. Vintage Gals meet Tuesday mornings 9:00am to 11:00am through April 30.

Questions about women's studies?
Contact fayettevillewomen@fellowshipnwa.org

One Word

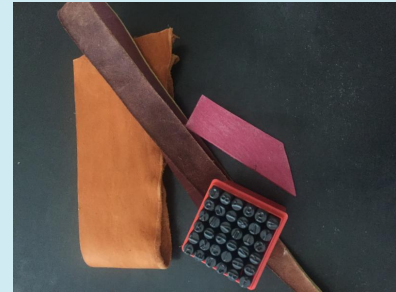
by Stephanie Hicks

What is *One Word*? An alternative to New Year's Resolutions. Lose the long list of changes for the year (that we never do) and pick *One Word* to guide you through the year:

Step 1: Determine your focus for the year

Step 2: Choose a word (google *One Word* for a list of possible words)

Step 3: Share your word with others and find others to support you in your word/goal.



About five years ago I started this with my Bible study. We continue to share our one word resolutions from different states. We usually write our one words in journals or keep them in our Bibles as a reminder. This year I'm going to imprint *One Word* on leather pieces. I ordered a leather stamping set and got a bag of leather pieces. They can be hole-punched for key chains, hanging, or other uses.

Won't you share with us so we can pass along your creative ideas to others? Click [HERE](#) to email your ideas on "How to Start 2019 focused on Him" and we'll share them in our February eNewsletter.

Did you know...



...that Fellowship Fayetteville has several all-women's community groups like this one ranging from young professionals to vintage gals? If you'd like to learn more and get in on the fun, or if you would like to start a new one in your neighborhood, contact [Margo](#) today!

Upcoming Trainings

Women's Discipleship Training

As Christians we are called to not only learn about but also live out the teachings of Christ. Discipling or being disciplined plays a huge part in being able to do that successfully. If you are a woman desiring to be a discipler, then join us for this 3-session training and be equipped. Click [HERE](#) to register.



Good News for Our City

Come celebrate with us as we kickoff the winter trimester of Fayetteville Community, and provide principles on how to share your faith. Open to all! Lunch will be provided. Childcare for infants through 2nd grade is also available on a limited basis. The **deadline to register and sign up for childcare is Tuesday, January 8**. Click [HERE](#) to register.

Ministry Spotlight



Discipleship for Women | [Learn more & enroll](#)

As a Christ follower today, we strive to incorporate discipleship into our everyday relationships. It is not just evangelizing, but mentoring: a spiritually older woman in Christ (discipler) teaches and models how to live a godly faith-filled life to a spiritually younger woman (disciplee). Formats may vary with each relationship, but Christ and the Bible remain at the center with spiritual maturity and reproduction the goal.

Mark Your Calendar

Discover Fellowship Fayetteville

Begins Sunday, January 13 at 10:30am

This 9-week membership experience will introduce you
to the heart and mission of Fellowship.

Find out where and how God wants you to get plugged into community.

Register [HERE](#)

Join us for *Onward*: A Young Women's Table Event

January 28, 6:30-8:30 pm

Watch for more information on *myFeed*

MERGE Premarital Workshops

Spring Session: February 10 - April 7, 2019

Summer Session: July 7 - August 25, 2019

Signup now and fill out the online survey.

Register [HERE](#) and enter the keyword search **MERGE**

Connect with us!



Fellowship Fayetteville Women's Ministry | 479-659-3684
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