

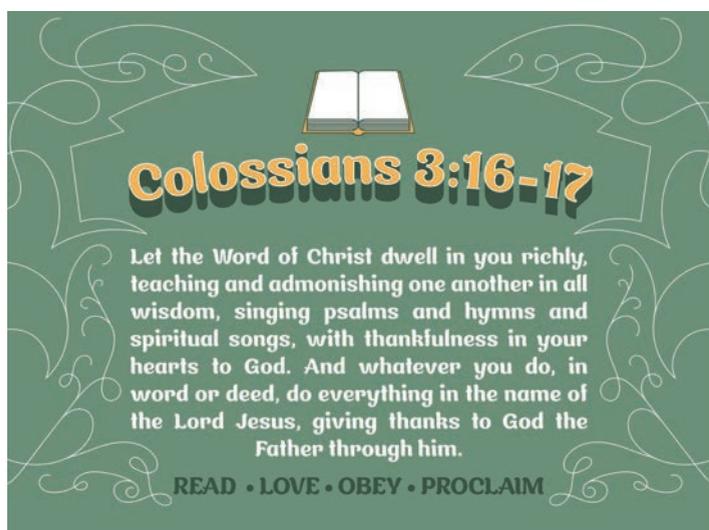
HONORING CHRIST TOGETHER

IMMANUEL WOMEN'S MINISTRY | IMMANUEL BIBLE CHURCH | SPRINGFIELD, VA

BE BIBLE WOMEN

If you know me at all, you know that I love to cook. My love for cooking comes originally from both of my grandmothers, who were amazing cooks. Happily, this love for cooking has passed on to my daughter, Dara, and my daughter-in-law, Mary Beth loves to cook as well. In one sense, our love for cooking is what makes us Drum Women!

We hear a lot about community today. Our culture is transient and so many people do not live near biological family. People cry for genuine contact and social media does add a level of connection. But Instagram and Twitter lack the reality of face-to-face community. In fact, technology can make us feel more isolated, not less.



God did not design people to live in isolation. We need encouragement and accountability, which comes when we “do life together.” There is a real sense of connection with my daughters from our mutual love of cooking. We love cooking and being Drum Women! When it comes to church however, our community must run deeper.

One of my favorite authors, Hannah Anderson, recently wrote a book entitled, *All That's Good*. In it she says, “when objective truth does not bind us together in community, something else – something less stable –

will.” We see a great deal of this in our society as people increasingly unite around superficial things at best and evil things at worst. In the church, we need something stronger to hold us together! Community built upon truth is much better and truly binds us together. Community built upon the objective truth of God’s Word is what we really need.

Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” (John 14:6) Scripture is God’s revelation of who He is and who we are in Him. Deuteronomy 32:47 says, “These are not just idle words for you – they are your life.” If we want to have true life-giving community, it must be centered on Christ and His Word. This is why our desire in Women’s Ministry is to “Let the Word of Christ dwell in (us) richly.” (Colossians 3:16-17) As we move in to a new year of ministry, we want to focus on these verses and four new goals:

- **Read God’s Word** • **Love God’s Word**
- **Obey God’s Word** • **Proclaim God’s Word**

At The Gospel Coalition Conference for Women in 2018, John Piper challenged all of us to Be Bible Women. As we read, love, obey, and proclaim God’s Word, we will be knit together in community and transformed from the inside out. The Bible has the power to transform our minds and hearts and unite us in true community. In this coming year and moving forward, let’s Be Bible Women together.

Serving with love,

– Bethany



Day by Day

Penny Wood

In the fall of 2006, my husband, Buddy, was diagnosed with metastatic melanoma to the brain. It wasn't his first encounter with melanoma. Twenty-five years earlier he had been diagnosed with melanoma on a birthmark behind his right ear and was told he may not survive the year. So we were not strangers to life threatening melanoma when the second diagnosis came.

On November 28, 2006, Buddy was taken from his workplace by ambulance to the hospital with a killer headache. The ER doc simply said, "Mr. Wood your scan shows 3 hemorrhaging brain tumors and we suspect your melanoma has returned." I remember my exact thoughts. "Oh, Lord, help me not to fail you here." His melanoma had indeed returned and he had multiple tumors throughout his body. Though we don't know what will come our way from day to day we do know God is in control and He will never fail us. Romans 8:28 promises all things work together for good for those who love Him and are called according to His purpose—that would be us.

Buddy had been meditating on a passage of Scripture before the second diagnosis came. It was Philippians 4:6-8, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will

guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." This Scripture became our mantra for the remaining 14 months of Buddy's life. In his hospital bed that first night he wrote down his requests (3 deep desires he called them) to present to God: to love and lead his family, to study and teach God's Word, to encourage his brothers and sisters in Christ. He would say, "It's funny, 3 hemorrhaging brain tumors... three deep desires! The Philippians passage also gave him the moniker for his Caringbridge journal, "A Glimpse into the Garrison". Because the word "guard" can also be translated "build a garrison around", he envisioned himself in this military garrison protected by and in union with Jesus Christ. We both came to believe that our cancer journey was not a freak accident but God's sovereign plan. Buddy said, "I believe God has made a statement about my life by allowing me to contract life threatening cancer." He viewed it as a special calling.

Buddy used "A Glimpse into the Garrison" as a vehicle to do what Buddy did best—teach! Anyone who visited his site kept coming back. They were hooked on his faithful teaching of God's Word. Praise God for His great plan to touch so many souls through Buddy's cancer!

Michael Easley, who was President of Moody Bible Institute at the time, was a good friend of Buddy's. He asked to interview Buddy and me

on his national radio broadcast. The timing was critical because Michael was due to have a serious back surgery and Buddy's chemo had quit working. Christian Pinkston, mutual friend and mastermind of the details, met us at a studio in DC, connected us to Michael in Chicago, and recorded the interview. Michael had his surgery the following day and Buddy began losing his ability to communicate within days. God's timing was perfect.

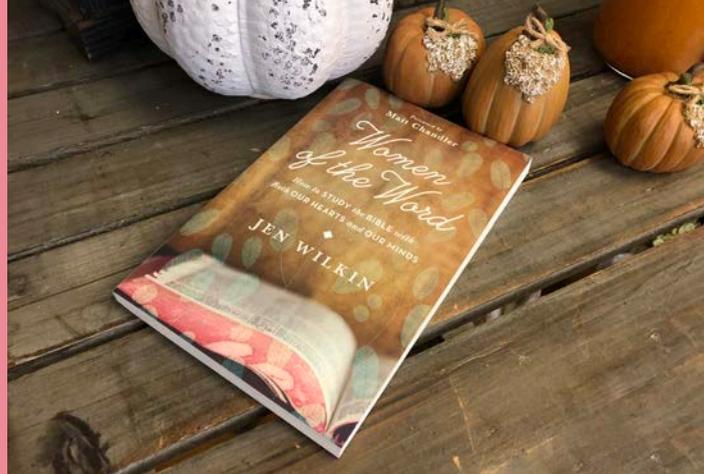
Cancer shines a spotlight on God's grace: living grace and/or dying grace. People watch, they pay attention when you are walking through the valley of the shadow of death. They desperately want to know God upholds His beloved children day by day. Many wondered how we did it. We didn't do it. God did it. We were ordinary believers who found extraordinary strength through daily studying of God's Word, claiming His promises, and trusting in the unseen. Most days we were stepping out where there was no ground. His Word was a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our path.

My prayer for you is that God will equip you to live your life to the fullest. Now, day by day, study God's Word. Get to know the Great God of the Universe intimately. Don't waste the rich and rewarding opportunity you have to prepare for your future.



BOOK REVIEW

Lisa Hartman | Reprinted from 2016



The books on my bookshelf say a lot about me. The titles tell you I am desperate to be a better parent. A good wife. A compassionate friend. A pioneer woman, Italian chef, Ina Garten's best pupil. I want to remodel, repaint, remake, repurpose. I must consider myself a "dummy" in many areas and have the books to prove it. I want to "walk off the pounds," visit South Beach and find ways to make my thyroid function better. And one day I'll get to those classics with the gold edges, but in the meantime, who-done-its and bestsellers win out judging by the number of volumes resting on the shelves.

Then there are **THOSE** books. The ones that really expose my deepest longing --- how-to books on prayer, devotion, holiness, gratitude, obedience, surrender, worship, praise, discipleship, evangelism, faith, forgiveness, trusting God, honesty and contentment. My favorites, though, are the Bible Studies -- tangible reminders of Tuesday nights or Wednesday mornings spent around a table at Immanuel or in a living room with a group of women eager to study God's Word. It is no surprise, then, that when I began hearing about a book about Bible



Study, I wanted a copy!

Jen Wilkin, author of *Women of the Word - How to Study the Bible with Both our Hearts and Our Minds*, says the following: "Home, church, community, and country desperately need the influence of women who know why they believe what they believe, grounded in the Word of God. They desperately need the influence of women who love deeply and actively the God proclaimed in the Bible. I want women everywhere to develop a deep and abiding love for Him through the study of the text that makes Him known." How that echoes my own heart! And how thankful I am that those words were in the first chapters of the book and not its conclusion. More than a book about Bible study, this is a book about developing Bible literacy - knowing and understanding God's Word. I

look at all those "how to" titles on my shelf, and I know, I want those. I need this!

Women of the Word shows us how to start; how to study more intentionally, with the right historical and cultural perspective. Jen encourages us to study God's Word with patience, teaching us how to linger over it, wrestle with it, and ask questions. She shows us a process of studying Scripture - not only to know more about God, but to know Him. To understand and be changed by God's perspective on my life. To love Him more. To become more like Him and to know his Son, Jesus Christ. I want that, don't you?

I want that more than anything. More than any subject on my bookshelf. Even more than being Ina Garten's best pupil (as great as that would be!). I want to go deeper in my study of God's Word. More than any book on my shelf, I'd rather be the best pupil of **THE BOOK** - any day.

How about you? May I encourage you to consider joining one of our Immanuel Women's Ministry Bible Studies this Fall? Take the first step and join a group of other women eager to know and understand God's Word.

Colossians 3:16-17

Marty Crabtree

There are 66 books, 1,189 chapters, 31,173 verses, and 757,444 words in the Bible. It was written over the course of 1,500 years by nearly 40 writers. In a work that vast, how can you and I find a practical, personal path to knowing and obeying God? One answer to that question can be found in Colossians 3:16-17, in which the Apostle Paul explains what it means to live the Christian life.

Paul's letter to the Colossians is a masterwork of theology, written to a church that was struggling with heresies and legalism, and forces that denied the deity of Christ. In Chapter 3, Paul reminds Colossian believers to "put off" godless behavior and "put on" attitudes and actions that demonstrate their new life in Christ. Paul concludes his guidance to the young church in verses 16-17, instructing them to "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly..."

If you are looking for a path to knowing and obeying God, this is a good place to start. The subject of this sentence is "the word of Christ" - what we generally refer to as the word of God. Here Paul skillfully equates God the Father and God the Son, proclaiming the deity of Christ to the Colossians and reminding his readers that Jesus is the "radiance of the glory of God, and the exact imprint of His nature..." (Heb.1:3). Or as Jesus himself said, "If you have seen me, you have seen the Father." (John 14:9) So the word of Christ is the word of God, the Bible.

So what are you and I to do with the word of Christ? The verb, let dwell, and the adverb, richly, represent complementary ideas. To dwell is to inhabit, reside, or make yourself at home. One way to think of "dwell" is the difference between hanging out at a house versus owning it. If you own a home, you sleep and eat there, you return there at the end of the day, and invite others to visit you there. Does the word of Christ make its home in your life or does it hang out from time to time?

The word "richly" implies what someone has called the "muchness of God." Paul uses this word in Titus 3:6 in which he describes the Holy Spirit "poured out on us

richly." Richly means abundant, overflowing, extravagant. It is like the difference between your relationship with an acquaintance and that of a spouse, child, sibling, or parent. You appreciate the folks you see from time to time, but the love for your family motivates you to make time for them, to think about them when you are apart; your heart is saturated with love for them, overflowing with acts of thoughtfulness and encouragement.

Taken altogether, this short phrase - let the word of Christ dwell in you richly - expresses a concept of enormous importance to us as Christians. Does God's word, the word of Christ, fill our thoughts and hearts? Do we return to it daily and immerse ourselves in it? Do we cherish it and live in its light? Do we dwell in it richly?

If we make our home in God's word, it will overflow in teaching and admonishing one another. Hey, wait a minute, you might say. Teaching is one thing, but admonishing seems pretty heavy-handed. When we dig into these words, however, we see that teaching and admonishing are a couplet, and both are grounded in the idea of wisely using the whole counsel of God - the Bible - to help another seeker see things from God's perspective. Admonition is not Bible thumping with a furrowed brow, but it is a trusted, caring brother or sister guided by the Holy Spirit and holding up the mirror of the word of Christ to you to help you see yourself and your actions in its truth. Teaching and admonishing is freedom and victory in Jesus; it is rich fellowship in which we share with one another the blessings we have received from our time reading, studying, and immersing ourselves in the word of Christ.

The word of Christ also has the power to teach and admonish us through our daily reading and meditation. One day several years ago, I began my quiet time in tears, crying out to God about my sadness that my sons and their families lived so far away. "Lord," I cried, "I just want my chicks in my nest!" I loved what my boys were doing, I just wanted them to do it in Virginia! Soon, I dried my tears and opened my Bible to read the passage for that day, Psalm 91: "He who dwells in the shel-

ter of the Most High will abide in the shadow of the Almighty... He will cover you with His pinions, and under His wings you will find refuge” (vss 1,4 ESV)

This time my tears were tears of joy as I knew that God had heard my prayer and answered me, showing me the truth that under His wings was a far better place for my family. That day the Holy Spirit taught me an important lesson about entrusting my loved ones to God’s care and admonished me for my lack of faith. The word of Christ truly overflowed in my heart.

What Paul is proposing in Colossians 3:16-17 is a radical lifestyle. This is not only talking about what we do at church or when we are with other Christians, but it speaks about the essence of our being as believers in Christ. In verse 17, Paul repeats three times what our oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ should look like: “whatever you do... in word or deed... everything you do.” We are his, so we think, speak, and behave like we are his. Dishes, diapers, emails, or meetings - no matter what we are doing, we show forth the excellencies of our Savior. The outflow of this radical lifestyle is thankfulness to God. Three times in verses 15-17 Paul encourages us to be thankful. God’s people are grateful people because they know and love Christ and find joy in serving and obeying him.

If that describes your Christian life - keep at it! Keep overflowing! If this sounds like the kind of person you want to be or know you should be, find a Bible study or fellowship group where you can receive biblical teaching and admonition with others who are seeking abundant life in Christ. If you are only an acquaintance of Jesus, today is the day to draw near to Him. He is waiting for you in the pages of his Word.



Desperate

Laura Corombos

When I started attending a women’s Bible study in January 2013, with my 6-month-old strapped to me, I was desperately thirsty for the Word of God. I had reached a level of exhaustion that I had never experienced before. I was running on spiritual fumes, trying to make it through the day. When I joined the study, the teacher spoke about understanding the “context” of the book of James.

Even though I had grown up in the church and knew a lot of facts about the Bible, I knew what I really needed was to immerse myself in the big picture of God’s Word. So I began a reading plan that would get me through the whole Bible in six months! I found that once I began reading at such a break-neck pace, I couldn’t wait for the next day to see how God’s faithfulness would be shown through the lives of Moses, Rahab, David, Paul...the list went on and on!

And then it hit me - I was reading the Bible for about 30 minutes a day. 30 minutes a day - the same time frame as some silly sitcom or home improvement show on television. If I had hunkered down like this years earlier, how many readings of the Bible could I have under my belt by now? I felt grief over having given that



precious time away to lesser things. I'm certain that you have had a similar struggle. Maybe you are in the struggle right now - knowing that you should be in God's Word, but not having that elusive hunger that so many people talk about.

I'll be honest with you - I am there now. After a very busy month, filled with ministry and hardship, my time in the Word has been anything but consistent lately. And yet the task before me is to write a Women's Ministry article about how important spending time in the Word is! Insert facepalm emoji here.

But God, in His abundant mercy, will not leave me here, just as he did not leave me six years ago. Instead

of living in guilt, I realized that God was using this situation to give me the insatiable hunger for His Word that I had always heard about, but never truly developed. I made it through the entire Bible in about 9 months and established a habit of daily time in the Word.

Am I perfect? Clearly not, as I have already admitted. But I am persevering through the power of the Holy Spirit. And through the years, God has taught me that the hunger is seen in the struggle. The very act of striving for consistency proves that I desire to be in God's Word. And time in God's Word is never wasted. It is through this time that God conforms me to the image of his Son. 

How Do You Read Your Bible?

Sonya Spillmann

I stand in my kitchen listening to a voice message from a young woman I'm getting to know. "I just have a quick question," her soft voice says. "Can I ask: how do you read your Bible?"

Before I begin to register the rest of her message, where she asks about what I read and how I decide, about when, and my preferences between digital Bibles apps or hold-in-your-hand Bibles; before she asks about taking notes, using commentaries, and which version I read; before she weighs the virtues of community groups to self-directed personal study, I start to smile. Then I hold back a laugh. Not because what she says is funny -- but because my answer is so ridiculously simple.

It's the same straight-forward answer I needed to hear when I was the one asking the very same question.

*

Years ago, I read an article about a woman who wanted to start running. Her husband was an avid runner and to her, his routine looked simple: he laced up his shoes and went outside. So she bought a pair of running shoes. But before her first run, she asked him what else she needed

to get started.

Well, I see you have good shoes, he said. Okay, are you wearing the right clothes? What are they made of? Are they moisture wicking? Reflective? How about your socks? How far do you want to go? At what pace? He started to talk about GPS trackers and heart rate monitors. Do you want to listen to music? He turned to walk towards the bedroom to grab some headphones. I like to wear a visor, he said. Oh, and you need a watch. Where are your sunglasses?

As he walked around the house talking, grabbing accessories, listing all he likes and uses in his personal running life, she shook her head in disbelief -- I didn't think it was this complicated -- and walked out the door, down the driveway, then started to run.

*

Keeping this running story in mind, I call my friend back to give her my answer in three parts.

In the first, I tell her what my current Bible reading life looks like -- the honest version. What I read and how I decide, how long and how often and how I try to stay

organized. How it doesn't always look exactly the same every single day. And I admit there are some days when it's only after I fall into bed at night that I realize I never even thought to read my Bible that day.

The second part of my message is a brief summary of the many iterations of what my Bible reading life has looked like in the past, including the long season when I didn't read my Bible at all -- despite faithfully going to church and having a saving faith in Jesus.

And then I told her the last part. The very short, very straightforward, almost laughable answer to her initial question.

"How do I read my Bible? you asked."

My answer is this: I just do.

I don't want to sound overly simplistic, I said. Or patronizing. Or to take away from how much scholarship is available on effective study of the Bible. But I also want to be honest about how, as ironic as it sounds, my own desire to read the Bible well (which one could translate as: taking pride in reading the Bible the right way) ended up distracting me from actually reading my Bible.

See, for years I had an idea of how much time I should spend in the Word, what version was The Right One to read, how I should have confidence to understand what I was reading, and that my quiet time should end with the experience of God or a feeling of growing in knowledge.

So when Bible reading didn't look or feel like I wanted it to (when I didn't easily discover secret doors opening to hidden passageways), coupled with little accountability -- I got frustrated and discouraged.

I'd look at my Bible, sitting faithfully on my nightstand, with a sense of obligation and guilt. When I did read, I'd then be ashamed of going to God's word only when I needed comfort. So I began to read it less and less and less.

During this time, if you'd asked me why a Christian should read their Bible, I'd quickly say because the Bible is God's word. It's the way for us to know who God is. I knew I should want to know more about God -- I just didn't have a desire to actually know Him. (And I'm not even sure I understood how that could happen through God's word and what that relationship even looked like.)

A.W. Tozer writes, "The Bible is not an end in itself, but a means to bring men to an intimate and satisfying knowledge of God, that they may enter into Him, that they may delight in His Presence, may taste and know the inner sweetness of the very God Himself in the core and center of their hearts."

And it was this difference -- between knowing the Bible but without having intimate relationship -- and seeing it in the lives of certain other Christian women, when I wanted the answer to the same question my friend, years later, asks me: How do you read your Bible?

Those women gave me very simple answers -- answers which helped me start small, the way a novice runner might start training for a marathon by running a single kilometer. Answers that gave me permission to read a version I understood until I had a desire to read the version I read now; answers that released me from shame and guilt and freed me to read a verse, a Psalm, a passage a day -- a time commitment which grew

into reading a chapter or an entire book. Answers that encouraged me to be expectant, to pray for the Spirit to work in my heart, and to read because Jesus first loved me and is calling me to Him -- not because I have to prove myself.

If you don't know how or where to start with your Bible reading, if you are reading your Bible less and less, or if you simply have a desire to know God more intimately and sense a difference between your life and that of a Christian woman you respect, I encourage you to ask her: How do you read your Bible?

Just like a seasoned runner doesn't hesitate to share what they know and encourage you where you are, a woman of the Word will do the same. There are many ways to read your Bible, but the common variable is remarkably simple: we all do. And we want you to, too.





IMMANUEL BIBLE CHURCH

6911 BRADDOCK RD
SPRINGFIELD, VA 22151-3602

NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MERRIFIELD, VA
PERMIT NO. 2157

IMMANUEL'S WOMEN'S
MINISTRY NEWSLETTER

HONORING CHRIST TOGETHER



WOMEN'S MINISTRY

Mission Statement

Encouraging all women to be
faithful followers of Christ who:

READ • LOVE • OBEY • PROCLAIM

God's Word

