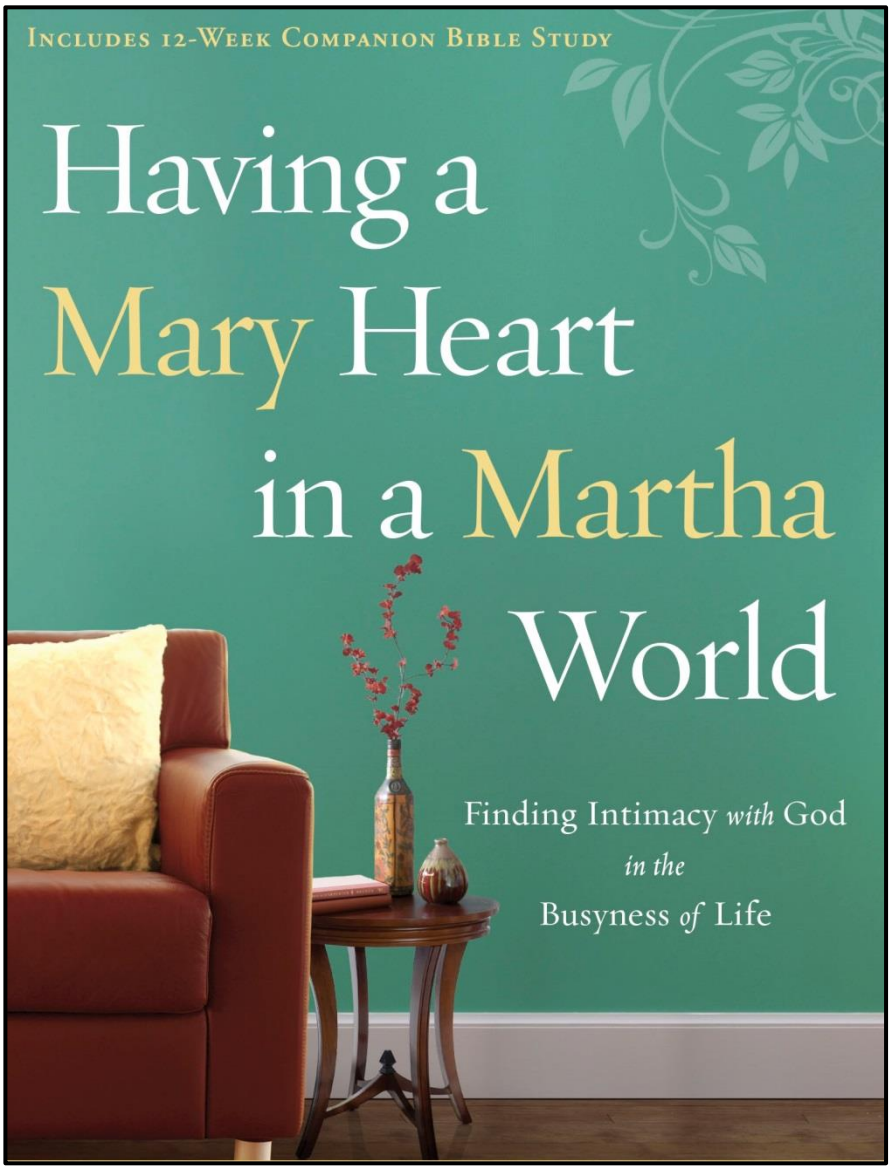

Retreat

Journal

Retreat Session One

Having a Mary Heart in a Martha World

Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door,

I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.

REVELATION 3:20 NKJV

The Story of Mary and Martha – the Story of You and Me, Luke 10:38-42

The Living Room Intimacy _____ God that we long for will never be found in Kitchen Service _____ God.

Discovering the Better Part

1. ***Martha opened her home*** (Luke 10:38)
    - preparations - *diakonia* - _____

2. ***Mary opened her heart*** (Luke 10:39)
    - She made _____for time with Jesus
    - She did the _____
    - She _____ to Jesus

The same invitation Jesus made to Martha is the invitation He makes to us:

"Come spend time with Me. Allow me to give you the Better Part…
Allow My _____ to so fill your life so that I can spill you to the world!"

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Word Time: Memorizing Scripture

Throughout this study, I've suggested a scripture to memorize and meditate on each week. Don't be intimidated; you can do this! Here's a method, adapted from the Navigators' 2:7 Discipleship Course[i], that has really helped me hide God's Word in my heart.

- ~ Write the verse (or verses) you want to memorize on an index card.
- ~ Read the verse out loud several times.
- ~ Learn the reference and first phrase of the verse together as a unit.
- ~ Repeat the unit three times, then add the next phrase. Repeat that three times.
- ~ Gradually add phrases and repeat the reference once again at the end.
- ~ Always review the verse using the following pattern:

  REFERENCE — VERSE — REFERENCE

  For instance: *"John 11:35, 'Jesus wept,' John 11:35."*
- ~ Don't forget to repeat the reference at the end—it's important!
- ~ Focus on saying the verse word perfect.
- ~ *Review, review, review.*

Scripture memorization doesn't come easily for most of us, but I can assure you, it will come if you persevere and practice! Don't give up. As you exercise your mind, your capacity for memorization will grow.

Why not start today? You'll find all of our study verses on page XX for easy reference.

I have hidden your word in my heart that I might not sin against you.

Psalm 119:11

Hebrews 4:12

Retreat Session Two

Burden Bearer

Give your burdens to the Lord, and he will take care of you.

He will not permit the *godly to slip and fall.*

Psalm 55:22 (NLT)

Jesus Came to a Burdened World

Religion had become a _____that Jesus said was impossible to bear (Matthew 23:1-4).

When it comes to sin, Jesus is our BURDEN- _____.

When it comes to life, He wants to be our BURDEN- _____.

The Invitation, Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."

- "Rest" means "inner tranquility while engaged in necessary _____."[1]
- Two main words for "burden":
  - *baros* – "a burden or difficulty"
  - *phortion* – "a _____"

"Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart …"

- A yoke is a symbol of _____.

"For my yoke is _____ and my burden is light."

Our Helper, the Holy Spirit, John 14:18, 26

Parakletos means "Helper"—the One "who is _____ alongside."

Your burden can be a _____ (OT – *yehab)* (Psalm 55:22).

[1] Spiros Zodhiates, gen. ed., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*, rev. ed. (Chatanooga, TN: AMG International, 1993), s.v. "#372".

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Word Time: Reading and Marking Your Bible

If you don't yet have a Bible that you really enjoy and understand, I suggest that you go to your local Christian bookstore and look at the variety of different translations available. Consider upgrading to a study edition that has a thorough concordance and study helps as well as brief explanatory notes and commentaries throughout.

Then begin to make this Bible your own. When I began to underline and highlight scripture, my Bible became alive to me and a tangible record of my walk with the Lord!

Here are some tips to enhance your reading and study experience[ii]:

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to speak something fresh to your heart (Ephesians 1:17).
2. Read slowly, thinking of ways to apply what you're reading to your life.
3. Using a pen, colored pencil, or non-bleed highlighter, mark things that stand out to you, such as words of encouragement, insights, challenges, observations, etc.
4. While there are different methods, here are a few simple markings you can use:

   [Brackets]—put around a phrase or place in margin to note a specific portion.

   /Diagonal Lead-in and out/—use within the text or in the margin to mark a longer passage.

   Circle—use to emphasize repeated words in a passage or to indicate the principal characters or themes of that passage.

   <u>Underline</u>—use to highlight words, phrases, or a sentence. For a block of verses, other markings are often less tedious than underlining.

When a verse really speaks to a situation I'm going through, I mark it with a star or make notes in the margins with a date to remind me of what God has said. This personal interaction with the Word of God has caused me to fall in love with the Bible even more.

I pray this exercise makes it come alive to you as well!

Practice method on Romans 12 (next page)
What stood out most to me…"

Word Time Exercise: Romans 12

Using the tips offered in "Reading and Marking Your Bible" sidebar, read the following passage slowly and prayerfully, marking what speaks most to you.

Romans 12

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies
as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of
worship. [2] Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be
transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test
and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.

[3] For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not
think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of
yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of
faith God has given you. [4] Just as each of us has one body with many
members, and these members do not all have the same function, [5]
so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member
belongs to all the others. [6] We have different gifts, according to the
grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in
proportion to his faith. [7] If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching,
let him teach; [8] if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is
contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is
leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him
do it cheerfully.

[9] Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. [10]
Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another
above yourselves. [11] Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual
fervor, serving the Lord. [12] Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction,
faithful in prayer. [13] Share with God's people who are in need.
Practice hospitality.

[14] Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. [15]
Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. [16] Live
in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to
associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

[17] Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right
in the eyes of everybody. [18] If it is possible, as far as it depends on
you, live at peace with everyone. [19] Do not take revenge, my friends,
but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge;
I will repay," says the Lord. [20] On the contrary:

"If your enemy is hungry, feed him;
if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.
In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head."

[21] Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

MY HEART – CHRIST'S HOME by Robert Boyd Munger

Robert Boyd Munger's article "My Heart Christ's Home" radically changed my approach to time alone with God. Through the simple analogy he suggested, I discovered what it meant to have a Mary heart toward God. Suddenly my eyes were open to what true devotion is. It is not a duty. It is a delight.

"Without question one of the most remarkable Christian doctrines is that Jesus Christ Himself through the presence of the Holy Spirit will actually enter a heart, settle down and be at home there," Munger says. "[Jesus] came into the darkness of my heart and turned on the light. He built a fire in the cold hearth and banished the chill. He started music where there had been stillness and He filled the emptiness with His own loving, wonderful fellowship."

Munger goes on to tell how he showed Christ around the house of his heart, inviting him to "settle down here and be perfectly at home," welcoming him room by room. Together they visited the library of his mind—"a very small room with very thick walls." They peered into the dining room of his appetites and desires. They spent a little time in the workshop where his talents and skills were kept, and the rumpus room of "certain associations and friendships, activities and amusements." They even poked their heads into the hall closet filled with dead, rotting things he had managed to hoard.

As Munger described each room, they reflected my heart as well. But it was his depiction of the drawing room that would forever change the way I viewed my time with the Lord.

We walked next into the drawing room. This room was rather intimate and comfortable. I liked it. It had a fireplace, overstuffed chairs, a bookcase, sofa, and a quiet atmosphere.

He also seemed pleased with it. He said, "This is indeed a delightful room. Let us come here often. It is secluded and quiet and we can have fellowship together."

Well, naturally, as a young Christian I was thrilled. I could not think of anything I would rather do than have a few minutes apart with Christ in intimate comradeship.

He promised, "I will be here every morning early. Meet with Me here and we will start the day together." So, morning after morning, I would come downstairs to the drawing room and He would take a book of the Bible…open it and then we would read together. He would tell me of its riches and unfold to me its truths.… They were wonderful hours together. In fact, we called the drawing room the "withdrawing room." It was a period when we had our quiet time together.

But little by little, under the pressure of many responsibilities, this time began to be shortened.… I began to miss a day now and then.… I would miss it two days in a row and often more.

I remember one morning when I was in a hurry.… As I passed the drawing room, the door was ajar. Looking in I saw a fire in the fireplace and the Lord sitting there.… "Blessed Master, forgive me. Have You been here all these mornings?"

"Yes," He said, "I told you I would be here every morning to meet with you." Then I was even more ashamed. He had been faithful in spite of my faithlessness. I asked His forgiveness and He readily forgave me.…

He said, "The trouble with you is this: You have been thinking of the quiet time, of the Bible study and prayer time, as a factor in your own spiritual progress, but you have forgotten that this hour means something to Me also."[5]

What an amazing thought—that Christ wants to spend quality time with me. That he looks forward to our time together and misses me when I don't show up. Once that message started sinking into my heart, I started looking at my devotional time in a whole new way—not as a ritual, but as a relationship.

And a relationship doesn't just happen. It has to be nurtured, protected, and loved.

Retreat Session Three

Pursued by Love

I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord. They will be my people, and I will be their God.

Jeremiah 24:7

Jesus, Our Way Maker
We were made for a Garden – but sin destroyed all that. Yet God's love kept reaching…

- God's holiness required a separation – the temple _____
- But then Jesus came as the final sacrifice to _____ us to God
- The veil was "torn in two from top to bottom" (Matthew 27:51).

Jesus, Our Example
Jesus came to show us the way back to Garden of Eden intimacy with God. He modeled:

1. Solitude – (Luke 5:16)

2. The Word - (Joshua 1:8)

3. Prayer – (Luke 11:1)

4. Dependence on _____ – (John 5:19)

Finding Our Way Back Home
Because of Jesus, we are invited to enjoy full and complete fellowship with our Father. (John 14:23; John 17:23).

Our life is "_____ with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:3).

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Word Time: Half-Day of Prayer

Something powerful happens when we set apart a block of time to seek God's face intensively. Here are a few guidelines I've adapted from the Navigator's 2:7 course for a half-day of prayer:

1. *Find a place free from distractions.* A friend's vacant house, a church or Christian conference center, or even a motel room will do.
2. *Bring along your Bible, a notebook, a pen or pencil*. You may also want a devotional, worship music, a prayer list, memory verses, and your weekly schedule. Wear comfortable clothes and bring a sack lunch.
3. *Stay awake and alert.* Get adequate rest the night before. Change positions frequently. Sit awhile, walk around—vary your position or activity.
4. *Bring a list of requests and needs.* If you need wisdom for something specific, bring it before the Lord along with other prayer requests.
5. *Make time to really listen to God.* Be ready to capture on paper anything the Lord might want to speak to your heart or call to mind through His Word.
6. *Incorporate variety in the day.* Read Scripture, pray, plan or organize. You might divide the time into three parts: (a) wait on the Lord, (b) pray for others, and (c) pray for yourself.
7. *Bring other Christian material*. Spend part of your day prayerfully and purposefully working through a book or Bible study.

Other tips include:

~ *Pray aloud* in a whisper or soft voice. Sometimes thinking things through aloud with the Lord is helpful.

~ *Make a worry list.* When things come to mind during prayer, don't ignore them; instead, write them down. Prayerfully prioritize these items into a "to do" list. Ask God to show you how to accomplish what needs to be done

> My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek.
>
> PSALM 27:8

Word Time: Bible Reading Highlights

When I first began writing down what I felt God speaking to me through His Word, the Bible came alive for me. No longer did I walk away, forgetting what I saw (James 1:23–24); instead, the Word began to change me as I found ways to apply it to my life. I invite you to try the approach I've found most helpful in my Bible reading[iii]:

1. Read slowly through a chapter until something sticks out to you, then meditate on that portion.
2. As you read, mark key words or phrases with one of the markings suggested earlier.
3. Use the following template to note the portion you've read and the reference of the verse you've chosen to meditate on. After writing out the verse, journal how it impressed you. You can do this in several ways:
   ~ Respond to God in prayer and personal application.
   ~ Paraphrase verses in your own words.
   ~ Note other verses that correspond with what you've read.
   ~ If you are confused by the meaning, ask God questions.

Date: _____ Portion I read today:_____
Best thing I marked today: Reference: _____
Verse:_____
_____
_____
How it impressed me: _____
_____
_____

You'll find several pages of these templates in the back of this Study Guide or use the format in a journal or notebook.

My son, do not forget my teaching, but keep my commands in your heart.
PROVERBS 3:1

Retreat Bonus Session

Developing a Quiet Time

"Trust in him at all times, O people; pour out your hearts to him, for God is our refuge."

Psalm 62:8

The Blessing of Solitude

When Jesus told Martha, "Mary has chosen what is better" (LUKE 10:42), He was inviting her to an intimate relationship with God.

"Only one thing is needed…" – vs 42

Time alone with God – how do we do that?

Roundtable Discussion:

Journaling Your Way to Intimacy, James 1:22-25

1. Journaling helps you to get quiet and _____ with God

2. Journaling helps you capture and remember what God is saying

3. Journaling helps you track and record your spiritual progress

"Start _____ but begin…"

Word Time: Praying God's Word

In John 15:7 Jesus shares an important link between prayer and the Word of God: "If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you." Imagine the power when we pray Scripture over the situations we face and the people we love! Here are a few ways to do that:

- Pray prayers directly from the Bible.

  And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God. (Philippians 1:9–11)

- Look for—and ask God to give you!—promises to pray.

  Being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. (Philippians 1:6)

- Personalize scripture for specific needs.

  My paraphrase: "Lord, You told me that if I lack wisdom, I should ask You and You will give it to me generously without finding fault." (James 1:5)

- Pray scripture over personal strongholds.

  For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV)

- Read inspirational scripture out loud as a prayer.

  O our God… we have no power to face this vast army that is attacking us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are upon you. (2 Chronicles 20:12)

- Pray one of the most important prayers: Jesus's prayer in Gethsemane

  "…not my will, but yours be done." (Luke 22:42)

Praying scripture not only has the power to change our hearts and minds; it has the power to change things around us. For God's hand is moved when God's people pray.

My word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

ISAIAH 5

Retreat Session Four

Compelled by Love

May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else…

I Thessalonians 3:12

The Call to Radical Love, Matthew 22:37-40

- Love _____ with all your heart, soul and mind.
- Love your neighbor as yourself.

While love is a noun, it is best lived out as a _____ (James 2:26).

Jesus' love in feeding the five thousand (Mark 6:30-44 & John 6:1-13).

The Challenge of Practical Love

PRINCIPLE #1 – True love always _____ something.

PRINCIPLE #2 – Do what you can with what you _____.

PRINCIPLE #3 – When we give what we have, God makes it more than enough.

Developing a Kitchen Service Heart

1. Be sensitive to the Spirit's leading.
2. Be willing to do what is _____.
3. Cultivate a holy detachment to the _____.
4. Be completely dependent.

"God [will] make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work."

2 Corinthians 9:8

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Word Time: Worship and the Word

Do you ever wish you had more words to express your love to God? Here's a secret I've discovered: God's Word is filled with clues that tell us not only *who* God is but *how* we can worship Him better and more. Scripture can actually become a script of praise, providing the words we need to magnify the Lord in the way He deserves.

For as Psalm 22:3 reminds us, God inhabits the praises of His people. He is literally "enthroned on the praises of Israel" (ESV).

Here are a few suggestions to begin:

~ Make a list of God's attributes—to remind you that He is worthy.
~ Proclaim the Word as worship—to tell God who He is and what He means to you.
~ Use the motions that accompany scriptural worship—clapping, shouting, lifting hands, bowing down, etc.
~ Listen to and/or sing scripture-based songs—to give voice to the Word of God.

Whatever you do, work on expanding your spiritual repertoire of worship! Don't be afraid to demonstrate your love and gratitude to God by using all that you are. Because God is worthy, my friend, and He longs for your love. Just as He longs for mine.

I will praise you, O LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonders.

PSALM 9:1

Retreat Session Five

Loving God Extravagantly

Then Mary took about a pint of pure nard, an expensive perfume; she poured it on Jesus' feet and wiped his feet with her hair. And the house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume.

John 12:3

At Home in Bethany, John 12:1-3

Over and over in the New Testament, we read that Jesus returned to Bethany.

Lazarus _____.

Martha _____.

Mary _____.

Scriptural overview of two anointings:

- End of Jesus' ministry, by Mary in John 12; by unnamed woman in Matthew 26:6-13 & Mark 14:3-9
- Beginning of Jesus' ministry, by a sinful woman in Luke 7:36-50

Giving a Gift Worthy of a Savior, John 12:3-8

Mary the worshipper became Mary the servant as she gave what she had:

1. The _____ was an extravagant sacrifice.

2. The _____ took extravagant boldness.

3. The _____ was extravagant abandonment.

The Beautiful Result

"The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume" (verse 3).

"Leave her alone. It was intended that she should _____ this perfume …" (verse 7).

Our Response: Philippians 2:17 – "poured" – *spendo*
Don't _____ to your life – pour it out.

Closing Time

I sense the Lord saying….

Bible Reading Highlights

Where to Begin…

If the concept of Bible Reading Highlights is new to you, you may be wondering where to begin. All scripture is inspired by God, but I've found some portions (Leviticus or Revelation, for instance) to be more overwhelming than others. When it comes to Bible meditation and personal application, here are some places you might start:

Proverbs—one chapter for each day of the month

Gospel of Mark—a great introduction to the life of Jesus

Galatians—a concise overview of the gospel message

Philippians—inspiration for victory in the midst of difficulty

James—practical advice for Christian living

1 John—an uplifting exploration of God's love

Date _____ Portion I read today _____

Best thing I marked today: *Reference*: _____

Scripture: _____

_____

_____

How it impressed me: _____

_____

_____

_____

Date _____ Portion I read today _____

Best thing I marked today: *Reference*: _____

Scripture: _____

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How it impressed me: _____

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Date _____ Portion I read today _____

Best thing I marked today: *Reference*: _____

Scripture: _____

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How it impressed me: _____

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Best thing I marked today: *Reference*: _____

Scripture: _____

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Date _____ Portion I read today _____

Best thing I marked today: *Reference*: _____

Scripture: _____

_____

How it impressed me: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

[i] Adapted from *Growing Strong in God's Family: A Course in Personal Discipleship to Introduce New Life to Your Church,* the 2:7 Series (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1987), 13, 19–20.

[ii] Adapted from *Growing Strong in God's Family*: The 2:7 Series (Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1987)

[iii] Format adapted from *The Growing Disciple,* The 2:7 Series, Course 1 (Colorado Springs, Colo.: NavPress, 1987), n.p.