

Nourishing Your Heart

Discover the Key to Connecting to God's Word
That Transforms the Way You Live

By Aliene Thompson
A Resource of Treasured Ministries



TREASURED
MINISTRIES

Nourishing Your Heart

Discover the Key to Connecting to God's Word
That Transforms the Way You Live

By Aliene Thompson

A Resource of Treasured Ministries



© Copyright 2019 by Aliene Thompson. All rights reserved. No portion of this ebook may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means except for brief quotations in printed reviews, without the prior permission of Aliene Thompson. Requests for information should be addressed to info@treasuredministries.com.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise indicated, are taken from THE HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION®, NIV®, Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. The “NIV” and “New International Version” trademarks are registered in the United States Patent and Trademark Office by Biblica. Use of either trademark requires the permission of Biblica.

Scripture quotations marked NLT are taken from the Holy Bible, New Living Translation, copyright © 1996, 2004, 2007 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used by permission of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, IL 60188. All rights reserved.



Part 1: Nourish Your Heart

Because You Were Made for More

Nourish Your Heart

Have you ever felt a longing inside that leaves you thinking there must be something else in life? In the daily busyness of life that creates a predictable, mundane rhythm, sometimes that longing is drowned out, but the desire for more never really leaves you. And at night or early in the morning, when life is still, your childlike faith peeks its head out of the covers and calls to your heart because you were made for more.

I've been there. The daily rhythm of my life was not without God. Church, Bible study, prayer, and serving others were a part of the drumbeat of my weekly life that I loved dearly.

But the life with Christ that I was exploring through church and Bible study and the life I was actually experiencing were miles apart.

"Changing my approach to Bible study was the key that opened the door into a new life.

**Indescribable. Authentic.
Secure. Beautiful. Brave."**



Can you relate? You are a Christian, and yet that longing inside you still wonders, "What if there is more to my walk with Christ than I am experiencing?"

Changing my approach to Bible study was the key that opened the door into a new life. Indescribable. Authentic. Secure. Beautiful. Brave.

Oh, I still feel afraid when adversity arrives. But I understand that my courage and strength come from looking at life through the lens of who God is and believing the voice of truth over the enemy's lies taunting me to fear.



Treasured one, Jesus stands at the door ready for you to experience the abundant life he came to give, and taking hold of this key to open this life matters. You see, the “more” for which you were created not only brings healing and joy but is designed to create a harvest to nourish others in a purpose God has tailor-made—just for you.

You matter.

Your life matters.

You are designed to make a difference.

Before We Begin Prepping for Our Journey, Let Me Share My Heart . . .

Jesus’s love for women was undeniable. As we walk through the Gospels, we encounter a Savior who reached beyond cultural boundaries to minister to women. He healed women. He defended and protected them. He forgave them. By grace through faith he gave them the gift of eternal life, setting them on an equal footing with men in his kingdom.

Jesus’s behavior toward women was not the norm in the years he walked the earth. Rabbis did not teach women then. But Rabbi Jesus did. He taught women the truth about God and about the purpose for which God created them. And his words of truth empowered women to walk in a new way—by faith and not by sight. Through eyes of faith, these women began to see themselves differently. They saw their circumstances differently. They saw God differently. And because Jesus taught them the truth about who they were, they lived differently.

As he captured their hearts with his words, they captured the life they were created and redeemed to live.

"As he captured their hearts with his words, they captured the life they were created and redeemed to live."



History tells us that women around the world have continued to encounter Jesus long after his ministry on earth—and because they connected with Jesus and found truth, their lives have been forever changed. These women have overcome all sorts of obstacles, adversity, and challenges with a strength the world cannot offer.

Still today, allowing Christ to redefine our identity and the purpose for which we were created affects not only our lives but also the lives of those around us. From that place of abundance, we can give to others the way God intended. We will join those who came before us, realizing that Jesus laid his life down to fight for our hearts, releasing us to live fearlessly for his glory as we look to him as our sole source for life.

The world is a battlefield where brave hearts make a difference. Jesus is still speaking to the hearts of women. His truth still changes lives, and those changed lives reach out and change others.

Did You Know You Are in a Battle?

As much as there is a God who loves you and is for you, there is an enemy of your soul who wages war by sabotaging God's truth in your life through the hurt, trauma, and pain we all experience inside our broken world.

We often are exposed to words from others or the world that contradict God's truth. In every culture throughout the ages, women have faced adversity. We live in a broken world with broken people, broken circumstances, and broken cultures.

"When we are wounded, damaging words seem to linger in our lives, and sometimes we are left wondering if we really matter at all."



Every woman has a story. A broken past. A broken present. We can all remember times we found ourselves alone, afraid, unsure. Others make choices that hurt us, and sometimes we make choices that hurt ourselves. The reality is that we live in an imperfect world with imperfect circumstances and imperfect people—and when we are wounded, damaging words seem to linger in our lives, and sometimes we are left wondering if we really matter at all.

The enemy of our souls is ultimately behind the evil that contradicts God's truth about who we are and leaves us with feelings of insecurity and inadequacy. God wants to release his potential within us so we can walk in our authentic identities and bring the love of Christ to others.

However, Satan, the enemy of our souls, would love to shut down our hearts and convince us that we are not valuable by speaking different words.

Does your thought life echo his lies? Lies such as—

- You do not matter to God.
- You cannot trust him.
- You are not enough.

When we are wounded in the battle, sometimes we create our own truth to cope with the pain. We create strategies for survival that draw us to outside sources to fill the void within. We build our own formulas for freedom, happiness, and peace.

Sadly, these self-designed “cures” always fail us. The things or people we depend on for our happiness just don't satisfy. Sometimes we attach ourselves to unhealthy sources and are wounded. Hurt and needy, we begin again the never-ending cycle of searching for that something or someone to satisfy the ache in our souls. And looking for the answers in the wrong places prevents us from being the persons God designed us to be.

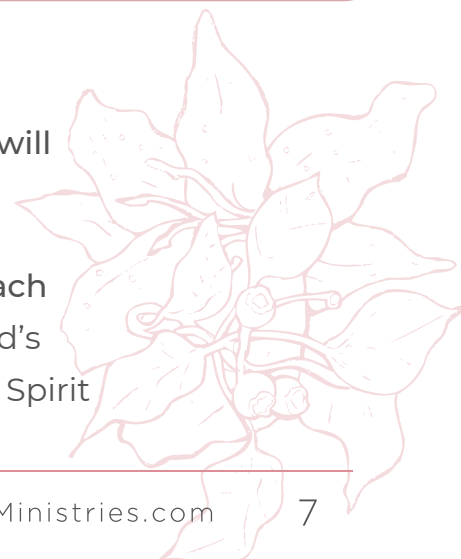
The Key to Victory Is Your Approach

We eventually can come to a point at which we begin to see how those cycles of “cures” are endless and the results are empty. We grab self-help books or even pick up the latest Bible study, hoping that by reading them, something will change.

But the truth remains—unless we connect with our Healer, we will continue to search for healing.

We don't need to read more words—we need God's word to reach our souls. Part of this journey is changing our perspective on God's word, from approaching it solely for information to seeking Holy Spirit revelation instead.

"Unless we connect with our Healer, we will continue to search for healing."



This is how the Nourish Bible Study Method is different. It is a key that helps unlock truth for the life you were created to live by giving you a proven, effective, three-step approach to Bible study that connects you with Jesus.

Self-help books and Bible studies are great in theory, but if there is no plan for how to activate God's truth in your life—they are simply lifeless words.

The Nourish Bible Study Method is your key to anchoring to God's truth so that you can receive more of what he has for you—a unique purpose that has your name written on it.

This was important to me when I developed the Nourish Method . . .

for every woman to be able to look at every God-inspired word in the Bible and see his truth shine through to light her path—a path that always starts with Jesus.

You see, when I changed my approach to Bible study, I encountered Jesus—and his words changed me. Completely.

What I Discovered Was the Permission I Gave Others

For many years I gave others permission to shape my identity through their words, leaving me with a false impression of myself, imprisoned by lies, codependent, and driven by the approval of others. This led to some unhealthy choices.

When I discovered the true source of life, Jesus, and allowed the Holy Spirit to reveal truth through the Bible, my life changed.

Through his words I gain the freedom, courage, confidence, and direction to become all he created me to be. His words continue to change me today and write my story as he writes his words on my heart.

One day at a time. One step of faith at a time. I am still on this journey today. Come with me!



Treasured one, it may have been words that wounded you. But ironically it will be words that will heal you. Not just any words—the ones that Jesus writes on your heart.

“The very words I have spoken to you are spirit and life.” (John 6:63 NLT)

Do you hear it, brave heart? It’s the voice of your Savior calling to you through his word. Take his hand and become the woman God created you to be. Life is very safe inside sanctuaries and Bible studies, but you were created to go beyond merely exploring your inheritance in Christ. You were meant to *experience* your spiritual inheritance.

"It may have been words that wounded you. But ironically
it will be words that will heal you. Not just any words—
the ones that Jesus writes on your heart."





Part 2: The Nourish Method

A Three-Step Process to Transform the
Way You Study God's Word

The Nourish Method

God has an amazing plan for your life, and his truth provides the nourishment needed for your journey. Let's get you equipped for your purpose!

Jesus has life-giving words for every woman. Jesus has life-giving words for you. He wants to reveal truth to us so we can rise above the lies from the enemy to walk in victory.

“People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4 NLT)

“People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” (Matthew 4:4 NLT)



Jesus taught us in Matthew 4:4 that his revealed words are daily food, essential for nourishing our souls. Spending personal time with God to hear his word for you is not merely an aspiring goal but also a necessary element for the health of your soul.

God's Word was intended to be written on our hearts by the Holy Spirit—to go beyond religious duty and head knowledge to a place of lasting truth that forever transforms our hearts and lives. And then as we live for him, he will work through us to change the lives of others.



When that begins to happen to you, you won't read the Bible out of religious duty.

You won't read it just for head knowledge.

You will read the Bible for *life*!

Ready? Deep breath. A great adventure awaits you, brave heart. You are needed on the battlefield. Let's do this!

"The purpose of Nourish is to connect you with Jesus, the source of life, so that you can share this life with others as you live out your authentic purpose."



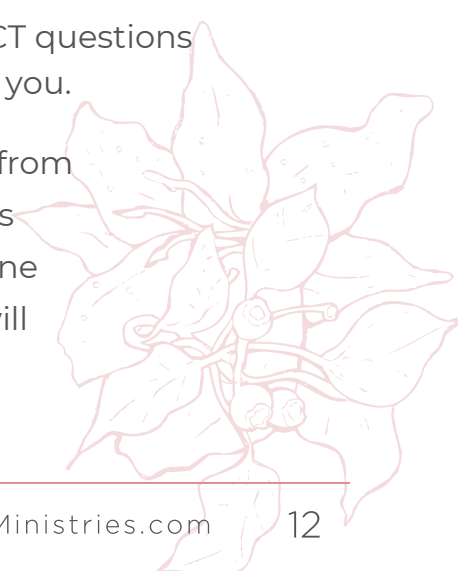
So let's get started! Let me introduce you to Nourish—the way I as well as many other women study the Bible. The Nourish Method is at the core of everything we do at Treasured Ministries. The Treasured Tribe, Nourish Membership, Nourish Together Groups, and Nourish Bible Study Series all incorporate the Nourish Bible Study Method.

The purpose of Nourish is to connect you with Jesus, the source of life, so that you can share this life with others as you live out your authentic purpose.

Without a plan, Bible study can seem overwhelming. It may feel like a religious duty instead of a life-giving experience. The Nourish Bible Study Method can help.

Here are the three steps that Nourish will lead you through:

- **Step One: Reveal.** Connect with Jesus by studying the Scriptures and allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal truth in the Scriptures.
- **Step Two: Respond.** Apply the truth using our IMPACT questions so that your life can impact the lives of those around you.
- **Step Three: Renew.** Let the truth you've just learned from God's word renew your mind. Allow God to anchor his word in your heart. Putting this life-changing discipline into your daily routine, using our practical method, will change the way you think and live.



Thinking About Your Time with Jesus Differently



Reveal. Respond. Renew. Take one step each day to help you pause from the hustle, and gather around the table with Jesus through the study of his word.

Jesus carved out time in his day to break bread with others. Whether in an intimate setting with his disciples, a wedding celebration at Cana, a seaside fish dinner cooked over a fire with friends, or miraculously feeding thousands with five loaves and two fish, Jesus paused to eat food with those he loved.

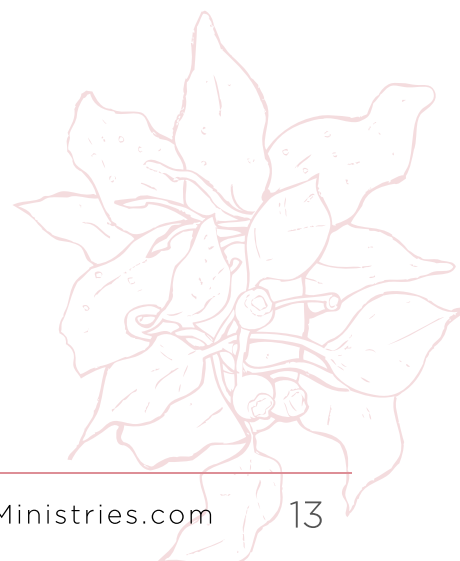
Think of your time with Jesus as gathering around a family dinner table he has prepared for you with much love and care.

Think of each step in the Nourish Bible Study Method as an ingredient in a recipe for a nourishing meal. Each ingredient is important and plays a role. Each ingredient interacts with the others. Combined, they enable you to find and understand life-giving truths in the Word that you had never seen before and nourish your soul for your journey in life.

Let's take a closer look at each of those three steps.

IMPORTANT TIP:

Do not complete all three steps in one sitting. The Nourish Method is most effective when you accomplish **one step per day**. Having time to pause allows you to process your passage with deeper understanding.





Part 3: The Reveal Step

Discover the Truth

35

OF DAVID.

Contend, O LORD, with those who
contend with me;
fight against those who fight against
me!

Take hold of shields and bucklers
and rise for my help.

Draw the spear and javelin
against my persecutors;

raise the bow and sling
against my enemies;

send forth arrows of truth
and fling them against my
enemies;

let them be brought down
and crushed like a wall of clay.

Break down their strongholds
and their towers of defense;

bring down their high fortifications
and their towers of defense;

bring down their high fortifications
and their towers of defense;

Day One: The *Reveal* Step

Connect with Jesus and Allow Him to Reveal Truth

Family dinnertime is sacred in our home. In the rush of our busy world, I guard it like a watchdog. The pause in the evening to gather around the table with my husband and two boys is like opening a gift at the end of each day.

We pray. We eat. We laugh. We talk. We disagree and sometimes argue. We discuss deep stuff and the everyday ordinary. We ask questions. We make plans. We tell jokes. We share about our day—the highs, the hilarious, and the hard times too.



There is something special about that time together—it is more than just eating food. It is about coming together to be with one another. Gathering at the table brings pause and a place to connect.

As you carve out time to dive into Bible study and pull your chair up to the table, don't come just to read. Come to connect with Jesus by relying on the Holy Spirit to reveal his word to you.

"Come to **connect** with Jesus by relying on the Holy Spirit to reveal his word to you."



Switching Up Your Goal: Why Are You Studying the Bible?

What if you switched your goal from completing your study to connecting with Jesus? What if you let go of the aspiration to understand it all or do it all? What if you saw the Bible as a way to connect with your Creator instead of a way to learn a list of rules to follow? This is what the *Reveal* Step is all about.

So often we make the mistake of coming to our table with Jesus to cross it off our to-do list rather than just to listen and let him lead and teach us. You see, God knows what we need when we need it.

It is possible to approach the Bible and diligently study the Scriptures but miss Jesus altogether. Jesus told the Pharisees that although they studied the Scriptures, they failed to come to him for life (John 5:39–40).

Discovering the difference between diligently studying the Scriptures for information and allowing the Holy Spirit to reveal truth through those Scriptures is life-changing—because Jesus is life-changing.

"What if you switched your goal from completing your study to connecting with Jesus?"



The goal of the *Reveal* Step is not to study the Scriptures solely to gain information. It is to connect with Jesus through the Bible and allow the Holy Spirit to nourish us with life-giving truth.



Putting It into Practice: How to Take the *Reveal* Step of Nourish

1. **Pray.** As you begin your time in God's word listening to Jesus, you will gain direction to becoming the woman God created you to be. Open your Bible to the passage you would like to study. Begin with prayer, asking God to speak to your heart.
2. **Journal.** Prayerfully read and reflect on the passage. Phrases, verses, or words will catch your attention because the Holy Spirit is highlighting truth for you—mark them. Journal any thoughts you may have. Taking pen to paper will help you to process what truth God is revealing just for you.
3. **Discover.** Some days you will simply mark up the day's passage in your Bible and journal. Other days the Lord will prompt you to learn more about a certain word or verse or to investigate background information on the passage by using outside resources. Let him be your guide.

On the next page, you'll find a table of some of my favorite resources and ways I use them in my quiet time. These are just some methods I use to learn more. **I don't do all of them every day.** Some days I just meditate on the passage and then journal what God reveals to me. **Above all, I remember to lean on Jesus as he leads me more deeply into the passage.** This list offers many suggestions. Don't be overwhelmed! Let God lead you!

Here are my favorite Bible resource websites:

- [Bible Gateway](#)
- [Blue Letter Bible](#)
- [You Version](#)
- [Bible Hub](#)
- [Study Light](#)



YOU TRY IT

Apply the *Reveal* Step

Open your Bible and apply the *Reveal* Step to Psalm 23. Journal your thoughts on a sheet of paper.



Passage: I love to check out other translations using any online site.

Word: If a word stands out to me, using Blue Letter Bible to find out the Hebrew or Greek meaning is always enlightening. The keyword search on Bible Gateway is great to find out other places in the Bible where a word has been used. Concordances are also helpful. I have one in the back of my Bible, but Bible Hub and Blue Letter Bible have great ones too. Helpful Bible dictionaries are also found online and can bring further understanding.

Verses: Cross references are corresponding scriptures. If a verse stands out to me, cross references are a wonderful resource to bring further clarity. Blue Letter Bible, Bible Gateway, and Bible Hub have cross references for verses. Cross references can also be found in the margins of some Bibles.

Bible Study Notes: My Bible has great study notes at the bottom of the pages. Reading those notes gives me quick historical or cultural background, which helps me understand the meaning of the passage. The notes also supply personal application points and reference other passages I may want to explore.

Outside Commentary: Like Bible study notes but on a much deeper level, commentaries are designed to teach us more about the Bible. My personal favorite is the *Wiersbe Bible Commentary*. To choose one that is right for you, my advice is to ask your pastor, Bible teacher, or small-group leader for a recommendation. It is not necessary to purchase a commentary, because many excellent commentaries are available online on each of the sites I referenced.



Part 4: The Respond Step

Apply the Truth

35

Great Is the LORD

OF DAVID.

Contend, O LORD, with those who
contend with me;
fight against those who fight against
me!

Take hold of shields and bucklers
and rise for my help!

Draw the spear and javelin
against my persecutors;
raise the bow and sling
against my haters.

Day Two: *Respond*

Respond to Jesus by Applying the Truth to Your Life

As a child I traipsed after my mom as she scurried around the kitchen in her high heels while she cooked dinner. I discovered from her that the art of crafting delicious, nourishing food comes through intentional focus and response.

As she stirred one of her many famous hot soups, she would encourage me to taste her creation, showing me how to respond to that taste by adding just the right amounts to activate the fullest flavor while obtaining balance. Over the years as she highlighted key ingredients, Mom taught me that the right ingredients are essential for creating good, nourishing food.

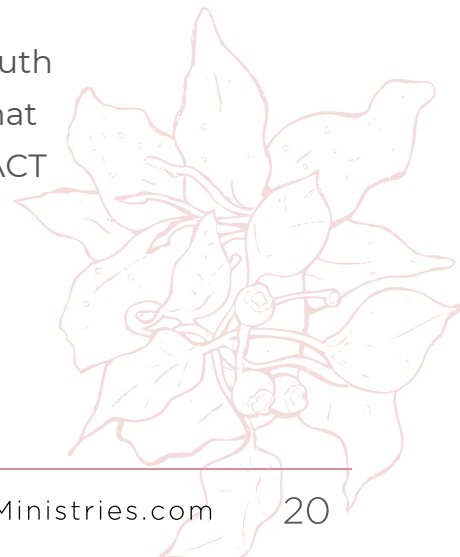


Just as the right ingredients are important for a great recipe, the right focus can help us refine truth further for a response that creates impact. When God initiates the process by revealing truth and we respond to that truth, it impacts our lives and the lives around us. Holy Spirit revelation requires application for activation.

Putting It into Practice: Taking the *Respond* Step of Nourish

How do you study the Word in a way that *activates* the greatest *impact* in your life? You do this by *asking the right questions*.

This approach provides the focus that will help you refine the truth further and apply it more directly and profoundly to your life. That was the purpose we had in mind when we created our six IMPACT questions, which are listed on the following page.



Return to your selected passage and ask yourself the six IMPACT questions below. Journal your thoughts.

What happens if some days you can't seem to come up with an answer to all six questions? Simple—don't worry about it. If after thinking about it for a few moments no answer occurs to you for a question, then move on to the next one.

IMPACT

1. **I**mage of God to trust? An attribute of God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit to trust.
2. **M**essage to share? A word of encouragement, truth, or prayer to share.
3. **P**romise to treasure? A promise in the Bible to believe.
4. **A**ction to take? A specific action step God is calling you to take.
5. **C**ore identity in Christ to affirm? A truth about how God sees you to affirm.
6. **T**ransgression to confess? A sin to acknowledge for help, healing, and restoration through Christ.

Now that you know the IMPACT acronym, you know what to look for when you are studying a passage. Let's dive more deeply into each question so you can see why each one is important in your journey to apply the truth to your life.

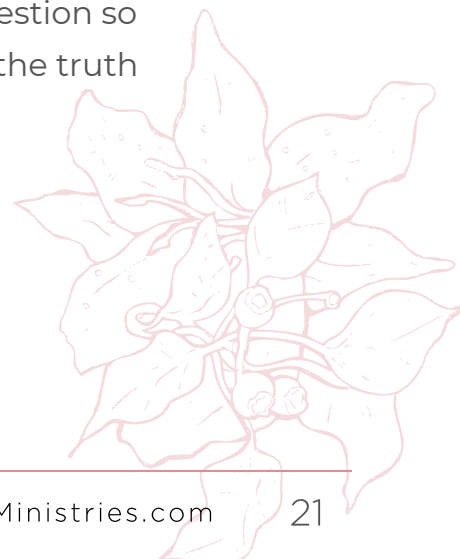


Image of God to trust?

An image of God is an attribute of God (including God, Jesus, or the Holy Spirit) stated directly or implied by actions in the Bible.

Who or what is painting your picture of God? It is eye opening when we allow the Bible to define God's image instead of allowing our circumstances to shape how we perceive God.

It is important that we begin here, since what we believe about God directly affects our thoughts and actions. The Bible is about God, and his primary purpose is to reveal himself to you through his word. What you believe about his character is vital to your walk with God and has an impact on how you see yourself and others.

Message to share?

A message to share is a word of encouragement, truth, wisdom, or prayer from the passage you feel led to give to another. It is also perhaps a message God simply wants to share with you.

When God nudges your heart to pray for someone in a specific way or to share a word of wisdom and encouragement, and you have the courage to follow through, you will be amazed at the impact it has on you and on the lives of those around you. God's truth refreshes your soul, and when you share this with others, you will find yourself refreshed also.

Promise to treasure?

A promise to treasure is a promise in the Bible to stand on by faith.

Imagine the difference it would make in your life and the lives around you if you moved from knowing God's promises to believing them. God's love for us is always unconditional. Sometimes promises are unconditional, and other times they require action on our part to activate the promise. For example, God promises to hear my prayers—but I must cry out to him in prayer for him to hear me.



His promises can become a matter of persistent prayer while we patiently wait and believe. Prayer is the key to keeping our hope alive and our steps aligned around his word. God is ever faithful to his word—always.

Action to take?

An action is a specific step God is calling you to take.

During your time in God's word, if he prompted you to take an action step, follow through and take that step as soon as you can. Share the step with someone for accountability.

Faith is an action—and faith and action walk hand in hand. Each day all of us act by faith in something or someone. What we believe drives our actions and determines our steps.

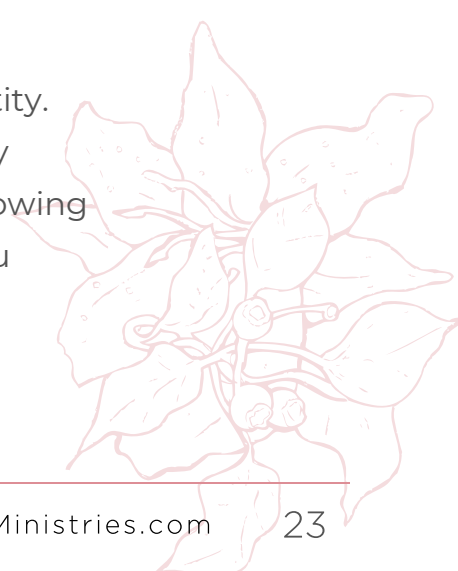
As you complete each step, Jesus will give you the next one—in his time. Your steps form a pathway for you to live as God intended. You don't have to figure the plan out—just follow. There is no such thing as a small step taken in faith. Each step, small or large, creates impact.

It's all about abiding in Christ, listening to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, following them, trusting in his strength, and receiving joy (Galatians 3:2–5; John 15:1–11). His wisdom and love for you are completely pure, so you can trust the leading of the Holy Spirit (James 3:17; John 10:10–12, 27).

Core identity in Christ to affirm?

A core identity in Christ to affirm is agreeing in your heart by faith with God's blueprint for your life and how he sees you.

Only by seeking your Creator can you uncover your true identity. Finding your core identity and purpose is not about frantically striving to be someone, but about surrendering to God by allowing his word to define who you are and the purpose for which you were created.



This is a precious treasure to guard by faith against outside influences (what others say, our circumstances, our actions, our past, our feelings, how others treat us, worldly standards) so that you can truly give to others by embracing all God has created you to be.

For this step, write “In Christ I am” statements that line up with the truth in God’s word. Below are some examples.

I am God’s child (John 1:12). I am completely forgiven (Romans 3:21–22).

I am not responsible for pleasing others. I live for Christ alone. (Galatians 1:10).

I am listening to the Lord because his words bring life (John 6:68).

I am very valuable to God (Matthew 10:31).

I am bringing my needs to God in prayer because he cares and wants me to do just that (Luke 11:9–13).

I am free from the law, so I can live by faith in the Lord Jesus! (Galatians 5:1)

I am resting in the power of the Holy Spirit to do God’s work (Zechariah 4:6).

I am not aiming for perfection. I am pursuing Jesus instead (Philippians 3:3–10).

I am confident in asking God for wisdom (Jeremiah 33:2–3).

I am a part of the most amazing family. I belong to the body of Christ (Mark 3:33–35).

"Only by seeking your **Creator** can
you uncover your **true identity**."



Transgression to confess?

A transgression to confess is the focus when the Lord brings a sin to your attention and invites you to confess it and bring it to light.

Without authenticity and vulnerability there can be no intimacy in your relationship with God. Instead of bringing God your good behaviors (self-righteousness) or justifying, hiding, or trying to change on your own, bring your sin to God through confession. Here you will find the grace, healing, and transformation that only Christ can bring.

The Holy Spirit highlights transgressions—not to condemn you but to free you to become all God created you to be.

True freedom is the process of aligning your life with the Almighty to become the woman you were created and redeemed to be. Confession is a key component of this process (1 John 1:9).

You will find the steps of confession, repentance, and receiving God's forgiveness to be beautiful because they provide a deeper understanding of God's amazing grace.

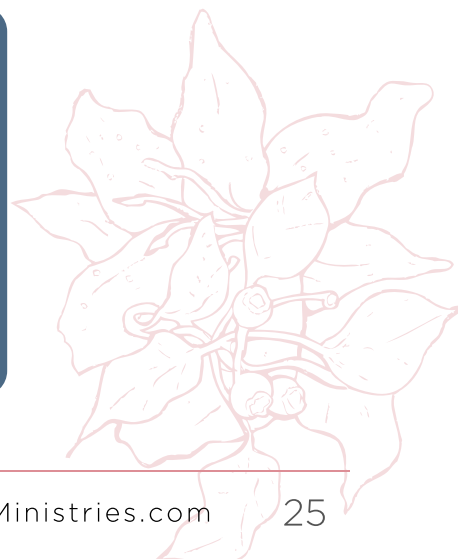
This process also gives you the ability and understanding to forgive others more freely. Confession ultimately yields authenticity and intimacy with God, freedom from perfectionism, and reliance on Christ to transform and restore you (Hebrews 4:14–16).



YOU TRY IT

Apply the *Respond* Step

Go back to Psalm 23. Ask yourself the IMPACT acronym questions and record your responses.





Part 5: The Renew Step

Anchor the Truth

35

OF DAVID.

Contend, O LORD, with those who
contend with me;
fight against those who fight against
me!

Take hold of shield and spear;
and rise for my help.

Draw the sword and slay
my enemies—
my persecutors—
my foes.

Day Three: The *Renew* Step

Renew Your Mind to Anchor the Truth in Your Heart

Have you ever left out a vital ingredient by mistake because that particular ingredient was just a small amount, but its omission had adverse effects? I have!

In my young married days as newbie chef I was determined to wow my husband when he returned home from a trip by making pound cake worthy of Martha Stewart's approval. Yassss! In my normal mode of cooking with creative chaos, "Chopped" kitchen style, I quickly combined flour, butter, sugar, eggs, vanilla, and a pinch of salt. But somewhere in the flurry of flour I forgot to add the small but all-important teaspoon of baking soda.



I Missed a Crucial Ingredient and All Went Flat

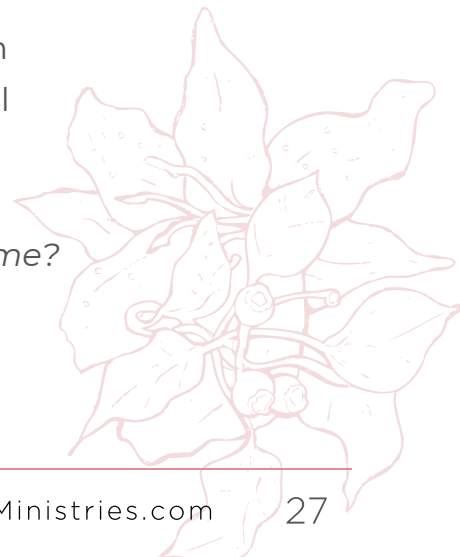
Needless to say, when I opened the heavy oven door, my soul became heavy too as I saw a flat, lifeless pound cake unable to rise to the occasion because it was missing a tiny but vital ingredient: baking soda.

Just like a dismayed contestant in the Food Network show *Chopped* who forgets a small basket ingredient because it was hiding under a dish towel, we can be disappointed with the results of our time in God's word because we have missed a vital ingredient to weave into the fabric of our lives: *biblical meditation*.

For years, although I was deep in Bible study, I shied away from biblical meditation and missed out on a vital ingredient for soul nourishment.

How could just five minutes a day focusing on one verse heal me?

Isn't that a New Age thing?



I heard a lot more about quiet time and Bible studies but nothing on biblical meditation.

Here's What Happened When I Added the Five-Minute Ingredient

But when I began to put God's prescription of renewing my mind into practice by starting my quiet time meditating on God's word for just five minutes, the results were incredible.

The shift in my life personally was so profound that I decided to renovate the Nourish Method to devote one entire step to this spiritual discipline.

God does not neglect to tell us about this vital ingredient. Over and over again in the Bible God tells his people to remember, reflect, and renew their minds on his word, his promises, his goodness. In fact, *meditate* is mentioned over 20 times in the Bible. This is for a good reason.

What you think determines how you live. What you practice in your thinking determines what grows in your life.

Why You Need This Crucial Ingredient

From the time you were born into a family, you were marinated in messages from your environment sent through the actions and words of those around you. Sometimes the messages were said directly and other times they were communicated through actions. As the actions of others played out before you, over time these messages created patterns in your thinking.

"What you think
determines how you live."



Some of the messages flowed from good actions: a hug, approval, a spoken word of encouragement. They told you—

- You are resilient.
- You are capable.
- You are valuable.

Other messages flowed from actions that did not align with your identity in Christ: a disappointed look or word, your parents sometimes handling situations poorly in front of you, passive-aggressive comments, silent treatment, or even your boundaries being violated sexually. These actions delivered flawed messages that told you—

- You are not good enough.
- You must please others.
- You are selfish if you say no.
- You are responsible for making other people happy.
- Your interests don't matter.

Over time, the "you are" messages that others are sending you become your identity, and these flawed messages are programmed deep within your thinking. "I am not good enough. I am selfish. I am responsible for making other people happy. My interests don't matter. I am selfish when I set boundaries."

They Become Your Drumbeat

You may not articulate these "I am" statements, but like a drumbeat that sets the pace to a tune, this programming from your past provides a rhythm you move to in life. Your thoughts drive your actions more than you are aware.

When you become a Christian, although you are a new creation in Christ, your old patterns of thinking still exist and will prove to be very powerful unless you take steps to be proactive against them.

How the Enemy Leverages Lies

The enemy of your soul knows your past programming too. He works to provide the lies he feeds you in your thought life to get you started down the wrong pathway of thinking. The messages we were marinated in while growing up push us to react and take the bait, creating bondage in our lives.



The Way to Overcome

But there is a solution. God in his great love has given us a way out. God in his infinite wisdom created our human minds with the ability to change through repeatedly renewing those minds. Science calls the human mind's capacity to change through repeated practice, *neuroplasticity*. For the Christian, biblical meditation is how we put this into practice.

You can rise up and challenge those lies by marinating your mind in the truth through biblical meditation. The more you marinate in God's message by spending time in his word, the more you will be able to recognize what messages from others are lies that do not line up with the truth about who you are as God's child.

But it's not enough to recognize the lies—you must rise up and take action steps to challenge them by speaking the truth, not just in your quiet time but also throughout the day. Jesus drew from the Scriptures to defeat Satan's manipulative tactics of temptation so that he could stand firm (Matthew 4:1–11).

Similarly, God's word is our offensive weapon in the battle against the enemy of our souls. Renewing your mind anchors truth in your heart, which allows you to have direct access to *life-changing truths anytime and anywhere*.



By the Sword of the Spirit

In his letter to the Ephesians Paul encourages the church to “take . . . the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” (6:17). A natural outcome of biblical meditation is memorization or hiding the Word in your heart, which gives you the best way to take your sword with you during the day to live in victory.

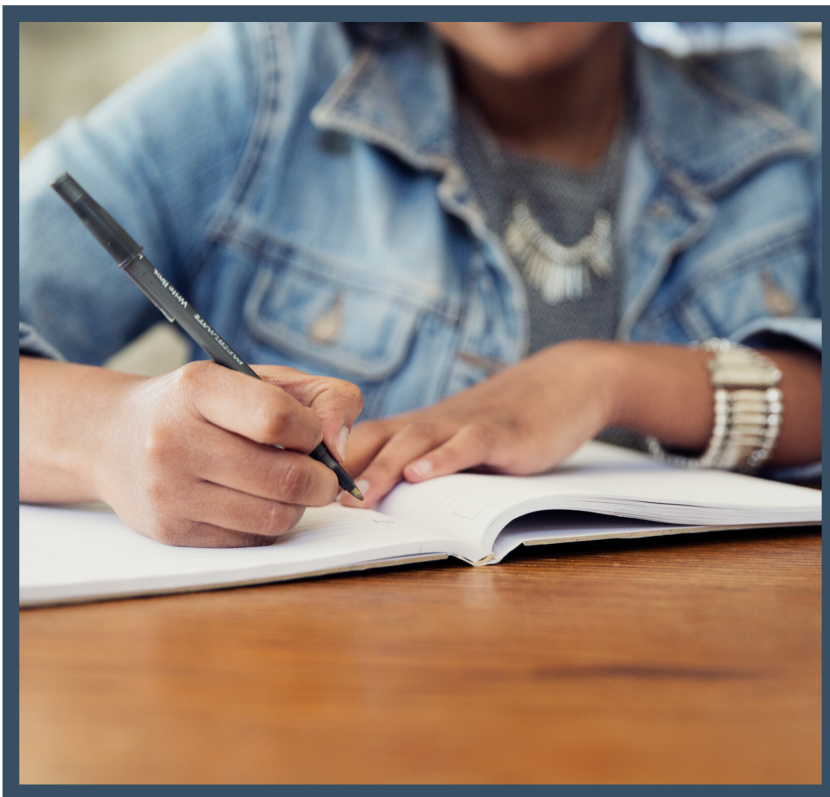


Challenging lies by marinating in the truth to take your thoughts captive to a new way of thinking is a lifetime process. It is not easy. But treasured one, hear this today: You are not bound to the past messages that messed up your life. Rise up and challenge those messages by confronting them with the truth in God's word, using the *Renew Step* of Nourish.

Putting it into Practice: Taking the *Renew Step*

Just like a boat tied to its anchor, God wants our thoughts to remain steady on his truths for our lives. God alone is our anchor of truth. As an anchor exists to secure a vessel so it ceases to wander, God's word secures our minds and hearts to him no matter what currents or waves we may face during the day.

During this third step, prayerfully review the journal entries you made during the first two steps. Ask God to identify for you the one anchor of truth he wants you to take away from this passage.



An anchor of truth can be one word, truth, or verse that the Holy Spirit emphasizes to you during your time in God's word—from any scripture or passage in the Bible.

1. Record your anchor of truth. Record your anchor of truth so that you can be grounded in it every day. I write my anchor of truth on a 5 x 5 card and tuck it into my Bible. Index cards work great! Be creative. One of my friends puts her anchor on her bathroom mirror so that she can't help but see it a few times each day.

2. Meditate for five minutes to start your quiet time. Start your daily quiet time by spending the first five minutes meditating on your anchor of truth. Quiet your thoughts. Focus on the truth. Read the truth. Pray the truth.

3. Pause to reflect. During the week, keep your mind centered by pressing *pause* periodically during the day to take your thoughts captive and renew them by meditating on your anchor of truth. Continue to reflect on your anchor of truth daily until the next week, when God reveals another truth to you in the course of your study.



YOU TRY IT

Apply the *Renew Step*

Go back to Psalm 23. Which verse stood out to you the most? Write that verse on an index card. Next, quiet your thoughts and spend three minutes taking the time to meditate on that truth. Read your truth. Say your truth. Pray your truth. Put an index card with your anchor of truth on your bathroom mirror. Take a moment each morning to focus on your truth.





Part 6: Getting Started

Nourishing Yourself Every Day is the
Key to Victory

Nourishing Yourself Every Day is the Key to Victory

There is one final ingredient, and it is your most precious commodity. **It is your time.**

You may be thinking, “How can I take time out when so many people need me?” There is no such thing as solitude in my house. How can I have any quiet time for Bible study when I have a million things to do today? As women we juggle many different balls flying in myriad directions.

Jesus knows what it’s like to have many important responsibilities. Jesus knows what it feels like to be pulled in different directions. Think of his time on earth. He had so many under his care, so many wanting him and needing him. Jesus never neglected his many responsibilities, but he let go of them long enough to retreat for time alone with God.

Just as Jesus took deliberate steps to pull away from the crowds to spend time with his Father, we must be intentional and plan our time to spend with God. “Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed” (Mark 1:35).

The Lord is not asking you to neglect those in your care; however, to give the best care to those you love, you need to spend time in God’s presence. And the way to accomplish this is by creating a habit.

You don’t think about eating daily meals—because it is a habit woven into your life. Cultivating a habit to carve out time for spiritual food is the key to setting aside time to connect with Jesus. As you retreat in his presence and find the gift of being with him, you will find yourself desiring more and more to pull away to be with him. But you have to be intentional to start this process and create the pattern that will get you going in the direction of your purpose.





Not gonna lie—cultivating this habit, any habit, is a huge challenge.

But this is a battle worth braving. Because you are worth it. You are created for more!

Habit experts tell us that when we make the habit easier, it helps us to cement the change we want to make. Having accountability, using the right tools, and developing a strategy are all ways to make a habit easier. And at Treasured Ministries we love providing this specific support to help women conquer the habit and get rid of quiet time guilt once and for all!

No one can do this for you. And it will still be a challenge, but you can do this and we are here to walk alongside you every step of the way. Remember that the enemy of your soul has a daily habit too. He wants to defeat you. He loves to battle by throwing lies your way, inside your thinking, on a daily basis.

But now is the time! Let's step boldly forward to live out our authentic identities and leave blessings in our wake. Today is the day you make a declaration against the enemy and draw a line in the sand. It's time to join with Jesus, take up your sword each and every day, walk in victory, and become all God has created you to be.

"It's time to join with Jesus, take up your sword each and every day, walk in victory, and become all God has created you to be."



How Can I Continue on My Journey? An Action Plan to Get You Started

Three Easy Action Steps to Keep You Encouraged on Your Journey

Action Step 1: Get Your [Nourish Notebook](#)

Your [Nourish Notebook](#) is a customizable tool that will guide you through each step of the Nourish Bible Study Method. It keeps you anchored and connected to the word of Jesus by keeping your focus on truth rather than lies. It provides a way to easily apply truth—because it's been engraved on your heart—to every aspect of your life, anywhere and anytime.

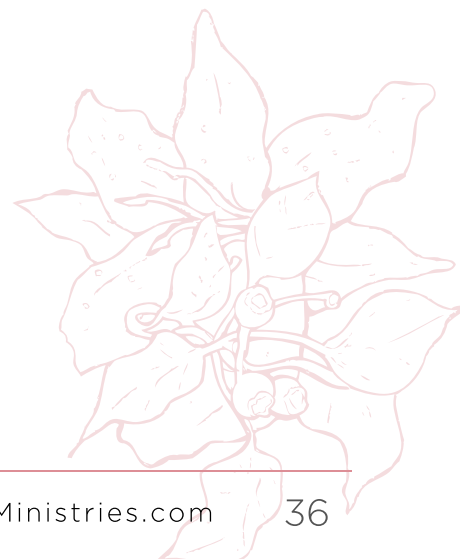


The [Nourish Notebook](#) helps you—

- Find time to nourish your soul by cultivating a daily habit with our daily guide to apply the Nourish Bible Study Method and journal what God is revealing to you.
- Lift up purposeful and intentional prayers to God.
- Hear God's voice and gain direction to become the woman he created you to be.
- Surrender your cares and worries to God through biblical meditation.
- See some attributes of God you may never have noticed before.
- Boldly approach the throne of grace and ask for what you need with expectant thanksgiving.
- Develop a bolder prayer life that flows from your study of God's word.
- Prepare your heart to receive refreshing words from God.



CLICK HERE TO GET YOUR NOURISH NOTEBOOK
TO UNLOCK GOD'S PURPOSES FOR YOU!



Action Step 2: Develop a Life-Changing Habit in 21 Days

After your purchase of the [Nourish Notebook](#), we want to walk alongside you as you continue to grow and connect with Jesus every day—for life! So we are giving you access to our exclusive 21-Day Challenge for free!

As the name implies, it's going to be a challenge, but don't let the enemy pull you off the path with fear and insecurities.

The challenge's intention isn't to “see if you can accomplish” something. Its purpose is to “watch what happens as you connect with Jesus!”

In 21 days—

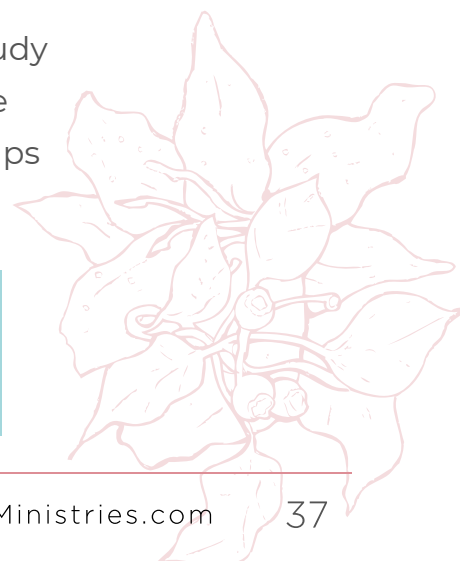


- Discover deeper application of the Nourish Bible Study Method and learn how to study the Bible step by step to find truth for the life you were created to live.
- Encounter the life-changing effects of God's word as you apply the Nourish Bible Study Method and connect with Jesus.
- Apply the truth and create an impact for your life and the lives of those around you.
- Gain a practical method and put the life-changing discipline of biblical meditation into your daily routine to change the way you think and live.
- Learn how to discern when God is speaking to you personally through his word and gain confidence and direction.

Without an applicable plan, cultivating a daily habit of Bible study can be an overwhelming task, but it does not have to be. At the end of this challenge you will have in your hands a tool that helps you study the Bible for a lifetime.



CLICK HERE TO GET YOUR NOURISH NOTEBOOK
TO UNLOCK GOD'S PURPOSES FOR YOU!



Action Step 3: Watch for God's Divine Purpose for Your Life to Unfold

As you start to use the [Nourish Notebook](#) to unlock God's words for your life, and as you continue with the 21-Day Challenge, the Holy Spirit will start revealing truths that are intended to heal your heart from every pain and wound in your past.

Take note of how God uses scripture, wise counsel, and echoing messages in your daily life to move you into your purpose.

It's time to step into the presence of God and hear his words as he speaks to your soul—unlocking your purpose.

As you respond to the Word and walk out God's will for your life in faith, you will receive nourishment that will flow to others as you become more and more the woman God created you to be. Find your voice by turning your heart toward his and creating music defined by steps of faith. Your authentic, God-given identity is needed and necessary.

As we gain the confidence to discern truth through the Bible, we can live our lives according to God's design. We accomplish this by receiving his perfect love and surrendering our hearts to trust him completely. As we listen to and are led by Christ through his word, his perfect love flows to us and through us to others (John 15:1–17; 1 John 4:16–19; Romans 8:15–17).

The table is set, and Jesus is ready to dine with you! He has truth to nourish your soul. Carve out time to open his word and feed your soul with the Bread of Life.

Nourish. A Bible Study Method for Life. Reveal > Respond > Renew.

You matter. You're invited. Come gather at his table!

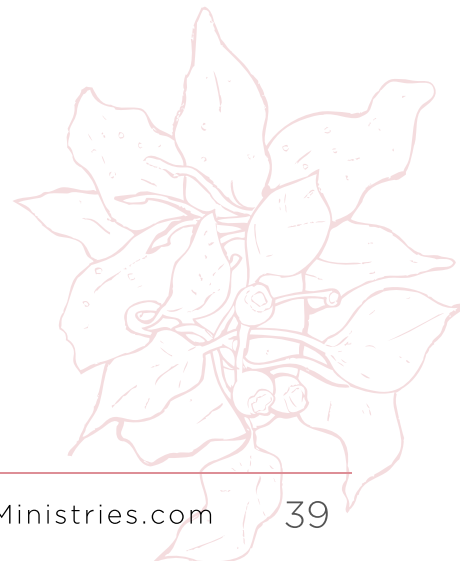



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Aliene Thompson

Aliene is the founder of Treasured Ministries and the author of the Treasured Ministries Bible Studies. She is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill with a B.A. in communication studies. She lives in Raleigh, North Carolina, with her husband and two boys. She invites you to study the Word each week by joining the Treasured Tribe private Facebook group.





"It may have been words that wounded you. But ironically it will be words that will heal you. Not just any words, but the words God writes on your heart."



Aliene Thompson