

Welcome Packet

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BIBLE STUDY LEADERSHIP TEAM

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MISSION STATEMENT

Cole Women's Bible Study is foundational to our other ministries. Studies are selected to challenge women in their walk with God. In the small group, along with praising God, concerns and joys can be comfortably shared and prayed for weekly. Women are encouraged to know God better through His Word, to grow to be more like His Son Jesus, and to encourage and help one another in loving fellowship and faithful prayer.

Please save this copy for use year to year.

GROUP GUIDELINES

To create an atmosphere where the goals of the Mission Statement may be met, here are some things we can commit ourselves to doing, *by God's grace*.

Getting the Most Out of Bible Study:

1. **Be intentional:** Make your Bible study a priority; carefully and prayerfully complete your lesson as much as possible prior to the meeting.
2. **Be punctual:** Arrive on time and respect your hostess and childcare workers by leaving on time. (Tuesday morning gals, please pick up children directly after the meeting ends.)
3. **Be sensitive:** We have different religious backgrounds and experiences (both positive and negative), political views, phases of life, and levels of spiritual maturity. We are all in process!
4. **Be aware:** There are very different life situations in your group, i.e. single, divorced, widowed, married with or without children, a variety of schooling situations, etc.
5. **Be soft-hearted:** during personal sharing, concentrate on your own attitude or action rather than putting others in a bad light.
6. **Be flexible:** Allow for other points of view; be open to the Holy Spirit and group members teaching *you* new ideas.
7. **Be heard:** Please speak up! Some group members may be hard of hearing and/or the room's acoustics may be poor.
8. **Be engaged:** All of those who belong to Christ have His Holy Spirit to lead us in truth. Share with your group what He has been teaching you; someone probably needs to hear it and everyone will benefit!

Because our Bible Study Time is Limited:

1. Please center the discussion on the passage at hand, avoiding references to specific books, speakers, pastors, TV, radio programs, blogs, podcasts, etc.
2. Please do not use group time to announce or solicit for your business, private fundraisers, social/political organizations, or home sales parties.



GROUP SUPPORT AND PRAYER

Our Bible Study groups aim to be a safe place where life's joys and struggles may be shared and hearts may be bared.

Group Support

1. Reach out to your group members when they are hurting or need extra encouragement. This might be through a meal, card, text, email, phone call, or praying with them, etc.
2. When sharing prayer requests, be aware that some women in your group may not attend Cole Community Church. They may have a different doctrinal view or experience.
3. Remember: what is shared in your group STAYS within your group. In such an environment, women feel safe sharing confidential information. Do not discuss a member's situation with anyone (close friends, other members, your husband, etc.)

Prayer

1. Enter into prayer time with an attitude of praise and thanksgiving. Thank God for who He is and how He shows Himself to us daily. Remember His attributes and thank Him.
2. Prepare for prayer time, asking God to guide you to what you are to share. Take some time prior to sharing to write it down in a few sentences. Please briefly state the situation and then tell us how to pray for you, such as:
 - ☞ *As I await God's timing and will, please pray that I rest in His love and peace.*
 - ☞ *Pray that I rely on God's sufficiency and sovereignty in the midst of this challenging and uncertain time.*
 - ☞ *When I am discouraged as my children make poor decisions, please pray for me to remember God is still in control and He loves them even more than I do.*
 - ☞ *Pray for the Spirit to prompt me to be still before my Lord. My God is capable and trustworthy!*
 - ☞ *As I seek the Lord's forgiveness, pray that I am receptive to His compassion and grace. I am His child by His choice.*
3. Be succinct with your prayer concerns to preserve time for all women to share. Occasionally you may need extra time to share, but please be sensitive so others do not miss the chance to share their hearts. Real relationships develop when we spend time listening to each other's deep concerns.
4. Please don't give advice during this time, but spend time praying and letting the Holy Spirit guide you to a place that honors God. If you know information that may be helpful, follow up with your group member via email or a phone call.
5. Listen actively as other women express themselves; they will know they are seen and heard (as opposed to judged or discounted) and intimacy (*into-me-see*) will blossom!

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GLOBAL OUTREACH WOMEN**Support and Encourage**

- ☞ Each Bible Study group has one or two Global Outreach women in whose lives they invest.

Part of the Group

- ☞ While they may not be present, they are considered part of the study.
- ☞ Display their picture during group meetings.
- ☞ Invite them to join your group when they are in town or by teleconference.

Connect and Pray!

- ☞ Sign up for a specific month to personally connect with them via letters, birthday cards, or other allowed forms of communications each GO Worker prefers.
- ☞ Pray for them weekly.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. What is the schedule?

We cover one lesson per week; refer to the Women's Ministry Calendar (extra copies available in the rack in back of auditorium, or on Cole's website) for details. Bible Study leaders have flexibility in setting their group's agenda. A general guideline:

	Morning (Tue., Wed.)	Afternoon (Tue.)	Evening (Tue., Thu.)
Opening Prayer & Announcements	9:15 – 9:30 am	12:30 – 12:45 pm	7:00 – 7:15 pm
Lesson Discussion	9:30 – 10:30 am	12:45 – 1:45 pm	7:15 – 8:15 pm
Share Prayer Requests & Pray	10:30 – 11:15 am	1:45 – 2:30 pm	8:15 – 9:00 pm
Finished	11:15 am*	2:30 pm	9:00 pm

*Tuesday attendees pick up children from childcare.

The four Luncheon/Dinner meetings extend meeting time by one hour.

2. What happens during Luncheon/Dinner weeks?

Four times during the Bible Study year, we extend the meeting time (and childcare*!) by an hour for your group to enjoy a meal and conversation together. This is a great opportunity to get to know the women in your group better and to encourage one another in our walks with the Lord. Your leader(s) will provide more details.

*Please bring a lunch for your child.

3. Why discourage sharing outside resources?

There are several facets to this guideline:

- a. Our primary reason behind this guideline is to preserve the integrity of the lesson discussions. If you wish to consult an outside source, it is always wisest to do so after you have studied the Scripture passage thoroughly for yourself. This will help you to recognize errors (and at some point, there will be errors!) in outside material.
- b. When a lesson quotes an outside source, you may be assured it has been vetted by our authors and editors. Furthermore, everyone in the group has had equal exposure to it – the playing field is even. If there are varying opinions about its soundness, those can be hashed out during discussion with everyone already familiar with the assertions.
- c. Women of all levels of spiritual maturity are in your group. We aim to ensure that Truth is presented clearly and that Scripture and the Spirit drive the discussion.

4. Do you have any tips for memorizing Scripture?

In essence, you have to find what works best for you. A few suggestions:

- ☞ Incorporate the verse into your daily routine: display it where you may review it as you brush your teeth, wash dishes, or wait at stop lights in your car; add it to your prayer time; or set it as a daily notification on your phone. The options are endless!

- ☞ See it everywhere: make it the background of your computer or phone, write it on an index card and use the card as a bookmark; or carry an index card with the Scripture in your pocket to review throughout the day.
- ☞ Try an app! Scripture Typer is available for all platforms; view it in action at scripturetyper.com.
- ☞ Set the words of the passage to music.
- ☞ As you meditate on the passage, sketch or color a simple picture that helps you to visualize it.

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WHY STUDY THE BIBLE

1. The primary reason to study the Bible is to know God more deeply and to love Him more.
2. Our world (and even our own self-talk) bombards us with lies. The truth of Scripture is the remedy. Knowing God's Truth *yourself* is the best way to recognize and defeat lies.
3. God is eternal — the same today as He always has been. Familiarity with His word helps you apply His truth in your current circumstances. Is He faithful? He was to Abraham. Is He trustworthy in awful circumstances? Joseph and Daniel would say so. Can He turn your life around? Look at what He did with Paul's. Their God is your God too! Does He *really* love you? Enough to suffocate to death on a cross in order to restore you.
4. Howard Hendricks in his excellent book, *Living By the Book*, says that Bible study is essential for 1) growth, 2) spiritual maturity, and 3) spiritual effectiveness. *Essential*.
5. Finally, you become like those with whom you spend your time. Do you want to be more like Jesus? Wonderful! His name is the Word of God; spend time with Him!

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Interpretation – What does it mean?

- ❖ Avoid: Misreading, Distorting, Relativism, Contradicting, Subjectivism, Presumptions, Overconfidence
- ❖ Identify Literature type
- ❖ Five Keys to Interpreting –
 - Content (*Observation results*)
 - Context (*Literary, Historical, Cultural, Geographic, Theological*)
 - Comparison (*Scripture with Scripture*)
 - Culture (*Bible dictionary and/or handbook*)
 - Consultation (*Concordances, Bible dictionaries, Bible handbooks, Atlases, Bible commentaries*)
- ❖ Terms (*Concordance & Bible Dictionary*)
- ❖ Figurative Language (*Figures of speech*)

Application – How does it work?

- ❖ Four Steps in Application –
 - Know the Text, Know Yourself
 - Relate the Text to Yourself
 - Meditate, Ponder the Truth
 - Practice (*Where is this truth needed?*)
- ❖ Nine Questions to Ask –
 - Is there an example for me to follow?
 - Is there a sin to avoid?
 - Is there a promise to claim?
 - Is there a prayer to repeat?
 - Is there a command to obey?
 - Is there a condition to meet?
 - Is there a verse to memorize?
 - Is there an error to mark?
 - Is there a challenge to face?
- ❖ Connect Then with Now
- ❖ Identify the Principles
- ❖ Life Change –
 - Make a Decision to Change
 - Come up with an Actionable Plan
 - Follow Through

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INFORMATION ABOUT COLE COMMUNITY CHURCH

Would you like to learn more about Cole Community Church? There are a number of resources available to you:

- ☞ Visit the Welcome Desk on a Sunday
- ☞ Our website: www.colecommunity.org
- ☞ The racks at the back of the auditorium contain:
 - Ministry information cards
 - Elder Position Papers
 - Ministry Philosophy papers
 - Global Outreach Information
- ☞ Connect with us on Facebook: facebook.com/colecommunitychurch
- ☞ Call the office 208.375.3565 and ask to speak with a pastor.



Bible Study Tool Chest

Pray!

❖ The Holy Spirit is your guide!

Observation – What do I see?

- ❖ Read Thoughtfully (*Ask questions*)
- ❖ Read Repeatedly (*Read the entire book in one sitting; Start at the beginning of a book rather than the middle; Listen to it on tape/MP3; Read different translations; Read it aloud*)
- ❖ Read Patiently (*Zoom in, Zoom out*)
- ❖ Read Selectively (*Who? What? Where? When? Why? Wherefore? How?*)
- ❖ Read Prayerfully (*Turn Scripture into prayer*)
- ❖ Read Imaginatively (*Try different translations & paraphrases; Rewrite the text; Read the text in a different language; Have someone read the text out loud; Vary your settings; Sketch it*)
- ❖ Read Meditatively (*Reflect, reflect, reflect*)
- ❖ Read Purposefully (*Look for the author's aim; Grammatical structure; Literary Structure – Biographical, Geographical, Historical, Chronological, Ideological*)
- ❖ Read Acquisitively (*With personal, active involvement; Put yourself in the scene*)
- ❖ Read Telescopically (*Get the big picture*)
- ❖ Look for Things That Are –
 - Emphasized (*Given significant space; Stated as a purpose; Order/Sequence; Progression*)
 - Repeated (*Terms, phrases, & clauses; Characters; Incidents & circumstances; Patterns; Old Testament quoted in New Testament*)
 - Related (*General → Specific. Questions & Answers, Cause & Effect*)