

Get in the Word

(* for real)

DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD
AROUND HIS WORD

Michelle Stimpson

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For the Kingdom

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of any Christian book is to take you back to the source - the Bible, the inerrant Word of God. This journal-style devotional was created with the same intent. I received the idea for it while discipling a sister in Christ who wanted to use journaling as part of her daily intimate time with the Lord. The problem: She wasn't sure where to start. "What do you do? What are the rules?" she wanted to know. Spontaneously, I handed her one of my journals to read. I didn't even remember what exactly was written in that journal (yikes!). I only knew that sharing it with her would give her a peek into my quiet moments alone with God and, prayerfully, let her see that the holy Scriptures speak to us at our core. She needed to see that believers have Christ living within us—and He *is* the living Word (John 1:1-2). The Bible is who we *be*, not just something we should read or something we should aspire to represent. It's not a checklist—it's our very life. Communing with God around His Word is sweet, fulfilling, and a return to the "cool of the day" fellowship He has always desired with us.

The Scriptures are able to make us wise in our walk. They are also beneficial for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training us in the righteousness we have in Christ so that we are well-equipped to do what He created us to do (2 Timothy 3:15-16). For this journal, I've included several Scriptures that have impacted me profoundly, but of course there is place for you to explore the Scriptures that have spoken to you. There are also several spots where I've suggested you share your thoughts with a friend. If your friend doesn't already have the book, you can print of those pages so that she can participate using this url: <http://bit.ly/GetInTheWord4Real>.

Don't limit your prayer life or your quiet time with God to what I have written in these pages. He is infinite! He should in no way be limited to one person's encounters.

Feel free to start with your favorite Scriptures if you see them in the Table of Contents. If you don't see any that are familiar, you can simply go in sequential order—it's really up to you to prayerfully explore these Scriptures as you are led by the Spirit within you.

I use several resources for my side-notes when I study Scripture: biblegateway.com (for various translations); blueletterbible.com (for original Hebrew or Greek words and their literal/non-literal meanings); commentaries (to make sure I understand the context of Scripture), and dictionaries (to refine my understanding of words and search out word origin). All of these resources are available online as well as through phone apps. You can use these, too, as you study the Scriptures on your own.

While these resources are useful tools, I receive the most meaning from the Holy Spirit. He brings other verses to mind, makes connections to the life of Christ in me, relates it to specific circumstances, and informs my prayers.

If you're new to studying the Scriptures, just consider this book "training wheels." I hope you will continue to be taught by Our Father through the Bible long after my marginal snippets of input have ceased. If you have been studying the Word for a while, I hope you'll be able to view the Scriptures with fresh eyes. No matter where you are in your walk, I pray, even now, that God will press these Scriptures (and more) onto your heart as you joyously dig into His Word and know His heart better.

Be blessed,

Michelle Stimpson

ENJOYING OUR FATHER WITH THIS BOOK

- Prayerfully read the passage indicated.
- Paraphrase the entire passage. This will help you spot confusion and point you toward seeking clarity. It will also help to internalize the meaning of Scripture.
- On the next page, write down the Scriptures or portions of Scripture that spoke to you.
- “Unpack” the Scripture(s) or portion of Scripture(s) that stuck with you most by asking questions, making notes, commenting, noting definitions, relating to other Scriptures, etc. Feel free to use arrows, drawings, highlighting, etc. to unpack the Scripture.
- Journal – Talk to God (pray in writing) about the Scripture(s) or anything else that the Word brought to mind. It’s okay to ask questions, express thanks and even frustrations in your journal—there are no rules! You don’t have to fill up all the space. You can staple another piece of paper into the book if you need to. You can record the things you hear Him whispering into your heart. Just be open before God and use this time to get to know Him as Abba, Father.
- Turn the page and view my notes about Scripture(s) from that same passage and how the passage impacted me as well. Please don’t think of my thoughts or the excerpts that spoke to me as “the right answers.” Just think of my words as an attempt to study and receive Scripture right alongside you. The Holy Spirit is so sensitive and personal that there are things I couldn’t include in this book. He has specific things to say to YOU, too! Enjoy this time with Him! This is one of the advantages we have as a believer.

- You will note that there are sections marked “Scriptures with Friends.” Follow the same process as before, only this time, share excerpts and study alongside your friends using the printable pages at <http://bit.ly/GetInTheWord4Real>. Share what you can to edify one another.
- For “You Choose the Scripture” sections, do just that! You might choose to explore Scriptures that have always stumped you, or go even deeper into passages that were mentioned in a sermon. It’s up to you. Enjoy!
- Feel free to share your thoughts through social media using the hashtag #GetInTheWord4Real.

Day 1
PRAYERFULLY READ

Ezekiel 36:16-38

Paraphrase: _____

Unpack the Scripture(s) or portions that stuck with you:

Michelle's paraphrase: *God did this for His name's sake, not the chosen people at that time or for me at this time. He removes filth and idols (v. 25), He gives me a new heart—soft (better to love). CAUSES me to do what pleases Him. Statutes and judgments aren't rules, they are life and love.*

Michelle unpacks the portion that stuck with her:

... I will take the heart of stone out

→ This sounds violent. Maybe it needs to be violent

→ Stone! Sounds evil. Was my evil? Yes - Jer. 17:19

of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you

↪ cause and effect

and cause you to walk in My statutes, ↪ ordinance

↳ cause = fashion, accomplish, make

and you will keep My judgments and do them.

↳ observe, give heed

↳ righteous, proper, fitting rule

Ezekiel 36:26-27
NKJV

Michelle's Journal

Abba, Father,

Wow. In a bad way and a good way. Wow in a bad way: The natural state of my heart is "filthy." I never saw it that way, but in light of your holiness, apparently it was. Looking back, I was sometimes afraid to deal with some people because I was afraid I would take advantage of them. And there was that time I felt this "sneaky" feeling come over me and I gave that boy Nicole's phone number when she didn't even like him. Yes, that was way back in high school, but the point is: I've felt it, the filthy heart. The part of my heart that got jealous and acted ugly when I thought someone was taking advantage of me.

The problem, I see, was in thinking that because I was a "moral" person, I was not exactly filthy. Dirty or dusty or cluttered maybe, but not filthy. THIS is the blindness, the darkness of living a "Christian lifestyle" without knowing You. The deception of "cultural Christianity."

Wow in a good way: Thank You for revealing Yourself to me and saving me!!! YOU clean my heart, YOU put Your Spirit in me and cause me to walk right, talk right, do right.

What, exactly, did I do? Surrender, I guess, but even that I'm not so sure about because the truth is: YOU chose ME, not the other way around. That's how it goes with adoption. I can't do anything but thank You.

Abba, this makes me feel kind of useless. What am I supposed to **DO**?

(Pride and self-sufficiency speaking. I know, God. I know.)

I hear Your whisper: Just BE. Simply BE and believe what You say is so.

I agree. Thank You.

Unpack the Scripture(s) or portions that stuck with you:

Unpack the Scripture(s) or portions that stuck with you:

Journal

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Michelle Stimpson, founder of Warrior Wives Club, is a national bestselling author, an educator, and a speaker who has trained thousands of women on everything from writing life stories to getting along with spouses. She has benefited greatly from the advice and wisdom of seasoned Christian women and is anointed to work with wives who are facing difficulties in marriage. As such, she is a popular workshop facilitator and always leaves her audiences thirsting for more of God's Word and His ways.

Michelle is a part-time educational consultant with an M.Ed. who uses her gifts and formal training to build the Kingdom for generations to come.

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