

VIVE GIRLS



*Struggles
that make
you stronger*

Divine
order

*The good
leader*

Rise
Above



HELLO SISTER

I am thrilled that you're holding our VIVE Girl Spring Global Sisterhood Devotional.

Its design has been to center us around a global conversation.

So why not think about discussing its contents with the sisters in your hood (wherever in the world that is) in cafés, on runs, via Facetime or any other new platform - TOGETHER is the goal!

I am believing that, through the course of this eleven week devotional, we will go on a journey together to learn practical advice on hope amidst the trials of life. Trials have the potential to reveal if our faith is genuine. What could possibly be better than a life that does not contradict the faith it boasts! Get your Bible ready.

Start by reading the chapter references throughout the week and then interact with the devotion together. I'm positive the hope and freedom we will experience within ourselves and together as a sisterhood will be our worthy reward.

Together we are making a difference.

Our mission is distinct.

"To awaken every woman to the reality of Jesus and bring Heaven to Earth."

Continue to keep this mission in your prayers as we believe for more.

You are loved.

Uniquely and as a sisterhood.

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END

Struggles that make you stronger

WEEK 01 | 1 PETER 1:1-12

“So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while.”

I love this time of year when blossoms swell into a visible display of creative cherry pink hues, ushering me to gain a bounce in my step again. It's finally spring, my favorite time of year! I love to gaze upon the yellow wildflowers that blanket the valley floor and savor the freshly clothed tree canopies.

It's been a wild winter, and the trees on my property have been stripped bare and exposed to the elements. In past seasons, I used to worry about them; they looked too lifeless. But each year, I've noted what they do. They simply resist the opposition and grow thicker roots and trunks. At the end of a winter like this, they are sturdier and more substantial, filling my property with a surge of spring growth. The stress they received produced a response, a strain, that initiated resilient strength. The very thing that could have been used to weaken them was the same thing that made a strength in them.

Peter encourages us at the beginning of this letter that there is tremendous joy ahead, even though we must endure many trials for a little while. A perspective that is true in deep and profound ways. We will all have winter months in our lives. We will all face challenging seasons. But after the winter comes the spring, and on the heels of a struggle, the potential to be strengthened.

You may be facing an uncomfortable environment. You may want shelter from the storm you're facing. Instead of wishing for a way out, maybe you could allow life's challenges to give you renewed confidence in God, who can use this situation for your good. So VIVE Girl, why not walk in renewed hope this spring?

Reflect on a trial or challenge in life you are facing. What would it look like to walk in renewed hope through this challenge?



Beauty like a flower in a field

WEEK 02 | 1 PETER 1:13-25

“As the Scriptures say, ‘People are like grass; their beauty is like a flower in the field. The grass withers and the flower fades. But the word of the Lord remains forever.’”

Some California poppies grow wildly by my pool. They are so bright and bold and beautiful. Their posture never slumps to focus on the base things around them. Instead, they tilt to gaze directly in the face of the sun. These beauties bathe in light and are fixed on their ultimate purpose: growing. It's how they take care of themselves and are nourished.

In week one, Peter emphasized walking in hope, but now he emphasizes walking in holiness. Holiness can sound intimidating, but quite simply, like the beautiful poppy stands set apart, you and I stand sanctified, which means we, too, are set apart for God's exclusive use and pleasure.

When we engage in separation from that which is unclean, we are not giving our time, attention, or selves to the potential weeds around us; instead, we offer our complete devotion to God.

VIVE Girl, we don't live double lives; there is no room for secular and sacred to dwell. All of our life is holy as we live to glorify God. Our faces are fixed on the Son, Jesus. And our attention leans into our ultimate purpose, growing to become more like Jesus daily. You are more beautiful and precious than any flower in any field.



Discuss as a Sisterhood: What does it look like for you to offer your complete devotion to God?

The unmixed Word

WEEK 03 | 1 PETER 1:26-2:10

“So get rid of all evil behavior. Be done with all deceit, hypocrisy, jealousy, and all unkind speech. Like newborn babies, you must crave pure spiritual milk so that you will grow into a full experience of salvation. Cry out for this nourishment, now that you have had a taste of the Lord’s kindness.”

One of the painful facts of life is that the people of God do not always get along with each other. You would think that those who walk in hope and holiness would be able to walk in harmony. But this is rarely the reality.

Peter gives us insight into God’s divine point of view; there is only one body. But what we see with human eyes is a church divided and sometimes at war. Yet God’s Word has life, gives life, and nourishes life. Peter says we should have appetite for the Word, just like hungry newborn babies.

It is interesting that he says the ‘pure’ Word, unmixed Word, because this alone can help us grow and live in unity as His church. The full-strength stuff, the hard-to-swallow stuff, is what we need. We live in an age and time where people water down the Word, but let me encourage you, VIVE Girls, to read it all, in its full strength, so that you can benefit from the potency of truth.



What ‘hard-to-swallow stuff’ have you been learning in your time in the Word? How is God using it to grow you in this season?



Divine order

WEEK 04 | 1 PETER 2:11-25

“Dear friends, I warn you as “temporary residents and foreigners” to keep away from worldly desires that wage war against your very souls. Be careful to live properly among your unbelieving neighbors. Then even if they accuse you of doing wrong, they will see your honorable behavior; and they will give honor to God when he judges the world.”

This central section of Peter’s letter emphasizes submission in the life of a believer. This is certainly not a popular topic in our day of lawlessness and the quest for personal fulfillment, but it is essential. Peter applied the theme of submission to the life of every believer as a citizen, a worker, a marriage partner, and a member of the Christian Church.

Submission does not mean being enslaved or overpowered by others. Instead, it is acknowledging God’s authority in our lives. God wants us to exercise our God-given authority, but we must be under authority before we can do this well. He models this within the God-Head. God the Father submits the promises and purposes of Heaven to Jesus, Jesus submits to God the Father’s plans, and the Holy Spirit offers Himself to communicate for both. They don’t lose themselves in their submission. In fact, the opposite is true. They fulfill their true identity in their submission to one another.

Women are sold the lie that we have to grasp our authority. Even from the very beginning, Satan’s offer to Eve was freedom with the prospect of greater authority. Still, as she exercised her freedom to choose and ate the fruit, she lost the freedom and authority she already possessed from complete submission. The world offers the same, but true freedom is found in submitting our lives to God and His divine order.

What does submission look like in your life - as a citizen, a worker, a marriage partner, and a member of the Christian Church?

Unseen attributes

WEEK 05 | 1 PETER 3:1-7

“Don’t be concerned about the outward beauty of fancy hairstyles, expensive jewelry, or beautiful clothes. You should clothe yourselves instead with the beauty that comes from within, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is so precious to God. This is how the holy women of old made themselves beautiful. They put their trust in God and accepted the authority of their husbands.”

A changed life preaches louder than any sermon, and it is often more effective in influencing those closest to us, our family. Those nearest to us see when our beliefs have changed and have informed our behaviors differently. They know our inclinations, patterns, and typical responses, so when we respond differently, it captures their attention and makes them aware of a higher help involved.

This is why Peter’s instruction to Christian women is so vital. It’s a truth that can be applied to many forms of relationship, namely those we do life closest with. Peter encourages women to develop and deepen inner beauty rather than focusing too much on outward appearances. And let me pause here for a second and say we don’t need to pendulum swing! You can be beautiful inwardly and outwardly, and there can be a wonderfully balanced approach. You don’t need to hide or dull your outer beauty; that’s not required. The focus is not to neglect the unseen attributes that can make a beautiful woman ugly.

Peter says these women will win their unsaved husbands by their love. The emphasis is on the development and maturity of her inner spirit to produce a godly character. It’s the quiet curation of your inner self. The disciplined approach is not having to win every argument, for you have a higher goal to win the individual. Living quietly and consistently in your home so that Jesus can be seen and experienced by everyone around you.

True beauty is inner beauty. Every woman can work on this, married or not.

Talk about a time when your changed inner character positively affected those around you. How can you continue to foster maturity of your inner spirit?





Rise above

WEEK 06 | 1 PETER 3:8-17

“Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. Don’t repay evil for evil. Don’t retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing.”

Did you know that you can deliberately decide to love life? This is an act of the will. Can you imagine a sisterhood that wills and determines in their heart to love life? Now imagine how that could have the power to change the world. It is an attitude of faith that sees the best in every situation.

I learned long ago that I do not need to simply endure life; I can set my will toward enjoying it. I’m not suggesting some kind of unrealistic psychological gymnastics that refuse to face facts. Instead, I’m urging us as readers, VIVE Girls, to take a positive approach to life. To, by faith, make the most of every situation as Peter instructed his readers.

This requires us to control our tongues. If I am honest, many problems are caused by the wrong words spoken by a wrong spirit. We quickly curse ourselves, our situations, and others who oppose us. Seldom do we do what Jesus modeled, which is turning the other cheek.

Peter encourages his readers to repay wrongs with blessings and tells us to pray for those who oppose us. In God’s kingdom, revenge is simply an unacceptable attitude of the heart. Insulting others, no matter how indirectly it is done, is intolerable. Passive aggressive jabs and drive-by remarks that disrespect others are ill-fitting for any girl in this Sisterhood.

The challenge in this passage is to rise above the urge to get back at others. Resisting the urge to retaliate. Instead, the response is simple... pray for them!

This is not a natural response but evidence of the supernatural at work as you become more like Jesus and mature in your faith.

Where have you been speaking curses where you need to rise above and speak blessing?

Clean conscience

WEEK 07 | 1 PETER 3:18-22

“And that water is a picture of baptism, which now saves you, not by removing dirt from your body, but as a response to God from a clean conscience. It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

I can distinctly remember the day I was baptized. It was a sunny Saturday spring morning, and I was eager to show my family and friends that my life had been transformed. It was an act I knew that would anchor me forward in moments I might otherwise consider turning back. Because this was such a public act, it prevented me from renouncing my faith when troubles came. This is why our baptism is important.

I was excited to identify with Christ and give witness to the fact that I had broken allegiance with my old life. I knew I would need His help to live a new life.

Some people make too much of baptism by teaching that we must be baptized to be saved, while others minimize it. Both extremes are wrong. If a believer is to have a good conscience, Peter says they must obey God. VIVE Girl, Have you been baptized yet? If not, what are you waiting for? Baptism is a ceremony that evidences our faith in Jesus’s death and resurrection. A symbol of the cleansing that happens in our hearts as we become believers.



Have you been baptized yet? If you have, share your experience with your sisters. If not, what are you waiting for?



Gift us

WEEK 08 | 1 PETER 4:1-11

“Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.”

We all have gifts...so gift us with yours! Sometimes, girls think they have gifts exclusively for their own use, and others feel they have no gifts at all. But Peter speaks to both parties and says find your gift and use it. If you see a need in the church, meet the need with your gift. As we use our gifts as Peter directs us, which is to help others, Jesus is glorified.

VIVE Girl, how can you use your gifts to bring God glory? Are you overlooking a gift you have? Are you holding a gift back? Self-assess and then release that gift to make this sisterhood even more magnificent!

Discuss with your girls: How can you use your gifts to bring God glory?
Are you overlooking a gift you have? Are you holding a gift back?

Suffering for the right thing

WEEK 09 | 1 PETER 4:12-19

“If you are insulted because you bear the name of Christ, you will be blessed, for the glorious Spirit of God rests upon you. If you suffer, however, it must not be for murder, stealing, making trouble, or prying into other people’s affairs. But it is no shame to suffer for being a Christian. Praise God for the privilege of being called by his name!”

Suffering for being a believer and suffering for doing ridiculous things are two entirely different scenarios that Peter highlights here. Have you ever had that sister who tells you they are being picked on for their faith, but actually, you know it is more believable that it is her unpleasant behavior that triggers all her problems? None of us want to be so blind to ourselves that this would be us, so Peter asks us to examine ourselves and determine the real cause of our suffering.

The bright part of this passage is where Peter assures us that when we suffer because of our allegiance to Christ, He will be with us. He will send His spirit as a great comfort and strength amidst all coming against us.

Compare when have you suffered for your own behavior versus when you have suffered for following Christ? How did Christ sustain you through the latter?



The good leader

WEEK 10 | 1 PETER 5:1-4

“And now, a word to you who are elders in the churches. I, too, am an elder and a witness to the sufferings of Christ. And I, too, will share in his glory when he is revealed to the whole world. As a fellow elder, I appeal to you: Care for the flock that God has entrusted to you. Watch over it willingly, not grudgingly—not for what you will get out of it, but because you are eager to serve God. Don’t lord it over the people assigned to your care, but lead them by your own good example. And when the Great Shepherd appears, you will receive a crown of never-ending glory and honor.”

Peter warned about persecution in his time, emphasizing the need for healthy spiritual leadership. This explains why Peter wrote this special message to the church leaders to encourage them to do their work faithfully.

God’s house is ordered. He has created His house where people are cared for well, especially during persecution. He has established leaders and encourages the characteristics they should possess. It would be good to note what a good shepherd behaves like because leaders who run away in times of difficulty only prove that they are hirelings and not true shepherds.

Good leaders are concerned for those God has entrusted to them. They are not casual about what God has put in their hands, understanding that these people are God’s and not their own. They serve and give their lives, and there is no sense of duty, only the privilege to lay their lives down for others. Good shepherds care more about what they can give than what they will ever receive in return. They are never fixated on what people can supply them, only on what they can do to support others. Good shepherds lead with character, not control. They inspire people because of their honorable lives.

Who has been a good leader to you in the kingdom of God? What qualities did they model that you hope to emulate in your own leadership?





Standing in grace

WEEK 11 | 1 PETER 5:5-14

“I have written and sent this short letter to you with the help of Silas, whom I commend to you as a faithful brother. My purpose in writing is to encourage you and assure you that what you are experiencing is truly part of God’s grace for you. Stand firm in this grace.”

Stand firm in this grace!

Peter encourages humbleness in this section of his letter because he understands that submitting to one another is the work of the Lord. Every individual must exercise a humble heart and spirit for unity to be achieved. We could see this happen in our sisterhood if we all thought about our sister and acted generously.

Peter also exhorted us to be watchful because we have an adversary. He said it is wise to respect him because he is dangerous, and you must be ready to recognize him because he is a great pretender and chameleon and hard to identify in a world of false truth. Resisting him is essential.

Peter closed on a positive note and reminded his readers that God knows what He is doing and is in complete control. No matter how difficult the trial may become, a Christian always has hope. We have God’s grace. We know we are going to glory. Our present suffering is only for a while. We know that our trials are building Christian character.

Peter’s letter urges us to hope in the Lord, no matter how trying the times may be. But whatever may come. Peter is still telling us to be hopeful that the glory is soon to come. So, VIVE Girl, stand firm in God’s grace for your day.

Pray for strength for your sisters to stand firm in God’s grace.

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