



# Welcome to a Thistlebend Discipleship Study

*What is more important than our  
relationship with the Lord?*

Thistlebend studies are designed for women who want to know Jesus more fully, love Him more deeply, and follow Him more closely. Dr. Thomas R. Schreiner commends, “*The whole aim of Thistlebend: to assist women to love Christ in the practical, nitty-gritty of everyday life.*” Therefore, the nature of the approach and the type of questions we ask may differ from other Bible studies on the same subject. Nevertheless, women participating in Thistlebend studies often share that they experience authentic growth and spiritual intimacy.

Real and lasting heart transformation takes place by God’s grace. We integrate biblical disciplines into every Thistlebend lesson where we ask women to “Take the Truth to Heart” and “Bring the Truth to Life.” These practices train women to *believe* God’s Word in their hearts, *apply it* in their thinking, and *live it out* in their lives. Our deepest desire is to see women cultivate hearts of righteousness, grow in their love for God and others, be equipped to overcome sin, walk by grace, live in the joy of the Lord, and glorify Him.

Many blessings in Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie". The script is elegant and cursive.

Laurie and the Thistlebend Team

## *Are you ready for a fresh encounter with the Lord in His Word?*

This workbook is your traveling companion on an exciting journey with the Lord! There is plenty of room to journal your thoughts and prayers and a spiral binding for ease of use. The appendix provides note pages for each week's teaching session. Each day, find a quiet, cozy corner to meet with God in His Word, pour yourself a cup of coffee, light a candle, and open your Bible.

### *The Workbook*

- Weekly lessons each containing six days of homework.
- A Scripture Memory Passage for the study is located on the first page of the workbook for those who desire to practice this discipline. Prompts are given throughout each lesson as a reminder to practice the Memory Passage.

### *The Weekly Lessons*

#### *Day One*

- Day One in each lesson begins with a devotional to provide direction for the week while preparing your heart and mind to receive the Lord's teaching throughout the remainder of the lesson.

#### *Days Two-Five*

- On Days Two through Five you will read Scripture and answer questions to help you think according to the Word of God and let the Lord search your heart.
- Throughout the study, you are often asked to copy Scripture word for word even when it is printed in your Bible or on the page. In our busy and task-oriented world, we tend to spend so little time really pondering or meditating on what God has to say in the Bible. Writing out Scripture helps you slow down and think about what you are reading so it will sink deep into your heart. This practice will increase your knowledge and shape your heart and mind to God's word.
- Each day you are prompted to work through the "Take the Truth to Heart" process (see Lesson One, end of Day Two).
- *Note:* While you are working through your daily homework you may have questions. There is an opportunity to discuss homework when your small group meets. However, Thistlebend encourages you to contact your small group leader any time during the week for help. If you are not in a group, feel free to ask questions at [info@thistlebend.org](mailto:info@thistlebend.org).
- Online participants may communicate directly with their online group leader.

***Day Six: “Bring the Truth to Life”***

- This day provides a way for you to review, assimilate, and apply the truths God revealed to you during the week.
- The “Bring the Truth to Life” section (see the example of Day Six, page vii) is completed by reviewing the “Take the Truth to Heart” boxes from days Two through Five. This section needs to be completed before you come to class (even if you did not complete the homework from other days). Be prepared to share your answers with your “Bring the Truth to Life” group.
- The “Bring the Truth to Life” chart is on the last page of each week’s lesson (see an example of the chart on page vii). This chart is used during the small group time to write out what each person shares so you can be praying for one another. Leave the chart blank until class time.

***Daily Homework Time Options***

- Choose the amount of time appropriate for your walk with the Lord in your current season of life. We encourage you to seek Him and His guidance as you make this choice.

Option 1: 15-20 minutes

Option 2: 20-30 minutes

Option 3: 30-45 minutes

Option 4: Complete the lesson regardless of the time it takes.

***Important Note:*** Keep in mind, you may not be able to complete the day’s homework in your allotted time choice. When you begin your homework the following day, begin with the next day’s homework. Do not try to finish the previous day’s work. Your goal is to set a pattern of consistent Bible study and to trust the Lord with what is left undone. Regardless of which option you choose, make sure you leave enough time to complete your “Take the Truth to Heart” section each day. At the end of each week, fill in the first two pages of the “Bring the Truth to Life” section on Day Six.

Please listen or view the audio/video lectures that accompany each weekly lesson on the app (Thistlebend Discipleship app/Discipleship Studies/Study Specific Name) or on our website, ([www.thistlebend.org/Resources/Study Specific Companion Resources](http://www.thistlebend.org/Resources/Study_Specific_Companion_Resources)). Passwords to the lectures are found on the last page of this workbook.

# *Church and Neighborhood Small Group Suggested Study Schedule*

(Online study schedule is in the following section)

## *Weekly Gatherings:*

Large Group Discipleship  
Small Group Discipleship  
Bring the Truth to Life Group

### *Large Group Discipleship Time*

- Fellowship
- Gather for announcements, praise song, and opening prayer
- Teaching time by the group leader or Laurie’s teaching video for the corresponding week
- Large group discusses how the Lord used the teaching time to speak to their hearts.

### *Small Group Discipleship Time*

- Following the teaching time, participants move to small groups. The small group leader begins by reading the prayer at the beginning of the Discussion Questions.
- Next, the small group leader reads the lesson summary for the week from the Discussion Questions. Then, the group will discuss the lesson’s main themes and review questions for each day.
- Finally, small group members are asked to fill out a Care Card (see the example of the Care Card on page vii) so the leader can pray for them and assist them as needed.
- The small group concludes by reciting in unison the Scripture memory verse(s) for that lesson.

### *Bring the Truth to Life Group Time*

- After discussing the homework, group members divide into smaller groups (3-4 women). This may vary depending on the size of the initial group.
- Each group member will have an opportunity to share from their completed “Bring the Truth to Life” pages. To allow time for all women to share, the group should set a time limit of three minutes for each person. Holding to a strict time limit helps the focus remain on God and His Word. The purpose of this time is not for women to “fix” one another, but to learn to confess their sin to one another while fixing their eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of their faith.

Therefore, each group member simply reads what they have written in their workbook. The other group members record what each woman shares on their “Bring the Truth to Life” chart (see the example of the Bring the Truth to Life Chart, page vii). This allows group members to pray specifically for one another throughout the week.

- Group members are encouraged to remember God’s love through the gospel as they share transparently.
- If you have any questions about these steps, please contact your group leader as soon as possible. She will be happy to help you with any questions you may have.

***What to Bring***

- Bible
- Workbook
- Pen

***Important Note:***

The Week One Class is an introduction to the study which includes: fellowship and icebreaker, praise song and prayer, introductory teaching and discussion, and a workbook orientation. Participants begin working on Lesson One following the first day of class.

The Week Two Class includes fellowship, praise song and prayer, the teaching on Lesson One, small group discipleship, and the “Bring the Truth to Life” group time. The following day, participants begin the next lesson in their workbook. Continue to follow this pattern each week throughout the study.

*May the Father pour out His love as you experience the grace of Jesus in fellowship with your sisters through the Spirit!*

# Online Participants

## Suggested Study Schedule

### Weekly Study:

Audio/Video Time

Daily Study in the Workbook

“Take the Truth to Heart”

“Bring the Truth to Life”

### Begin with Teaching Video/Audio (available online or on the app)

- Each week, schedule a day and time to watch or listen to the teaching lecture.

### Daily Study in the Workbook

- Begin your homework in the workbook with Lesson One the day after you watch or listen to the introductory lecture.
- There are six days of homework in each lesson.
- Days Two through Five include a “Take the Truth to Heart” box.

### Bring the Truth to Life Pages

- At the end of each lesson, on Day Six, complete the “Bring the Truth to Life” pages (see Day Six, pg vii).
- Share an image of your “Bring the Truth to Life” pages with your online group leader via email or text. The purpose of this section is to enable women to identify their sin and confess it.
- Your online group leader will respond to you and pray for you specifically.
- If you have any questions about these steps, please contact your online group leader as soon as possible. She will be happy to help you.

### Optional:


#### Review Discussion Questions (available online)

- Pray, reflect and note how the Lord spoke to you through the teaching.
- Read the main point of the lesson and answer the Discussion Questions.

# Study Documents

These documents and more are available on the Thistlebend app (Begin Here) and website (Resources).

## Care Card



Care Card

Name & Cell \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date & Lesson Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Thistlebend Homework  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I completed the homework I committed to do each day  
 \_\_\_\_\_ I only completed \_\_\_\_\_ days of homework

The reason I did not fully complete my homework is:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Personal Spiritual Prayer Request:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Prayer Requests for Family & Friends:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Questions or Concerns:  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Feedback

1. What was most helpful to you personally about the lecture?
2. Was there anything that was confusing or that you did not understand?
3. What was most helpful to you about the homework?
4. Was there anything that was confusing or that you did not understand?

## Affirmation and Commitment



Thistlebend Affirmation and Commitment

We love because God first loved us (1 Jn. 4:19). We want to follow God, trust His will for our lives, and no longer live for ourselves. "And He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised" (2 Cor. 5:15).

We want to love the Lord and others as He commands in His Word. Jesus said, "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 20 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. 31 The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself'" (Mk. 12:29-31).

Having witnessed the destructive power of sin in our hearts and lives, we desire to learn how to repent of our sins and walk forward by grace through faith in the power of the Holy Spirit.

We desire to lay down our pride and humbly admit that we cannot do this on our own. We desire the support of fellow Christians and are willing to allow others to speak truth into our lives. James 5:16 clearly says, "Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed." Our relationship with God is personal, but it is not private. Because as Christians we are a part of the body of Christ, what we do in our personal lives affects our brothers and sisters in Christ. Therefore, we speak the truth to one another in love (Eph. 4:25; Gal. 3:9). Confessing our sin to another believer strips away the mask of hypocrisy. Confession humbles us, which uproots pride.

We want to continually seek divine aid to enable us to walk circumspectly and watchfully in the world, denying ungodliness and every worldly lust (Eph. 5:15-21; 1 Pt. 2:11-12; 1 Jn. 2:15-17).

As true disciples of Christ, we want to follow Jesus' commands to take up our cross and follow Him in obedience. "Then Jesus told his disciples, 'If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done'" (Mt. 16:24-27).

Live our lives in the light of the gospel by grace through faith.  
 Daily "Take the Truth to Heart" and "Bring the Truth to Life."


We want to participate in each other's joys and endeavor with tenderness, sympathy, and prayerfulness to bear one another's burdens and sorrows.

We want to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

We desire to offer ourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God as our spiritual form of service and worship (Rom. 12:1).

Forgive others as we have been forgiven. "Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:32).

## Day Six



Day Six

Bring the Truth to Life

*But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*  
 2 Peter 3:18

PERSONAL REFLECTION: Looking Back  
 In what areas has the Lord given you wisdom, grace, repentance, or encouragement this week?

STEP ONE: Take the Truth to Heart  
 Review the 'Take the Truth to Heart' sections from each day. Look to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of your faith ( Heb. 12:2), and choose one Scripture from the week that the Lord is using to renew your mind and transform your heart (Rom.12:2).

How is God using this Scripture to teach, instruct, reprove, correct, encourage, or train you (2 Tim. 3:16-17)?

## Bring the Truth to Life Chart

Bring the Truth to Life Chart

This chart is to be filled out on class day.

1

Step One  
*Take the Truth To Heart*

2

Step Two  
*Put the Flesh To Death*

3

Step Three  
*Bring the Truth To Life*

| NAME | SCRIPTURE | SIN | ACTION |
|------|-----------|-----|--------|
|      |           |     |        |
|      |           |     |        |
|      |           |     |        |

