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August 2018



## The Vertical Fuels the Horizontal

Thursdays are one of my favorite days of the week. It is Women's Bible study day at my church. I have often been amazed at how God has selected just the right study or put me in just the right small group each semester to aid in my spiritual transformation. These days remind me how my vertical love for God and His Word fuels my horizontal love for my sisters. Word-based and relationally-driven studies keep me anchored in the content of the Gospel being lived out in the context of my relationships with other women. I think many women set up a false dichotomy in Bible studies. Two distinct camps develop: Should we give our energy towards focusing on relationships and provide a warm welcoming environment or should we lean more towards a serious academic study of the text. If we only focus on the relational side of ministry, we will ultimately be weak and anemic. However, if we only focus on the content side of ministry, we will become cold and academic. Both are necessary. Word-based studies fuel relationally-driven ministry.

*"Profitable ministry among women is grounded in God's Word, grows in the context of God's people, and aims for the glory of Christ."*

**Word-Filled Women's Ministry**

"All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17

What is more relational or intimate than God breathing out His Word to us? This is

a robust and relational portrait. We lean in to hear, taste and see the breath of God when we gather around the Word. This Word is useful and profitable for doing life together. It corrects us and trains us for the purpose of fulfilling every good work He has prepared for us to do. The depth of our vertical relationship with God and His Word will ultimately be seen in the way we live and love others horizontally. It is the picture of knowledge acquired becoming knowledge applied. Sound doctrine fuels sound living. The more I understand God's Word, the more motivated I am to obey His commands. But as I step out to walk in truth, I am quickly reminded of how far my life falls short of the standard of His Word. This realization drives me to His Word and towards others where I can experience growth in grace in the context of community.

*"Out of sound doctrine flows  
sound living."*  
**Martin Luther**

*Karen Hodge*



[enCourage Blog and Podcast](#)



Life can be a struggle and we know that most women today are on the run-- whether we are running to a college class, running after kids, or running to doctor appointments as we care for aging parents. The enCourage blog and podcast seek to help us keep our eyes on Jesus in the busyness of life.

**Tool Box:**

Need a helpful tool to evaluate Bible study material? Check out this rubric designed by Jen Stegmann, Director of Women's Ministries at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Nashville, TN.

[Click for the Bible Study Materials Rubric in our Tool Box](#)

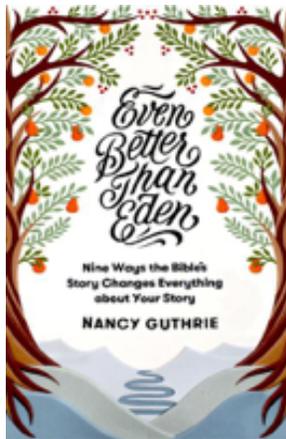
[ONE Conferences  
Register Now!](#)

Our oneness will either validate or negate the claims of the gospel. We pray you will join us at a ONE conference in 2018 where we will challenge women to think biblically rather than emotively about oneness from the truths found in John 17. Join us in Annapolis MD, Chattanooga TN or St. Louis MO.



- Early Registration Deadlines:
- Annapolis – August 17
  - Chattanooga – August 24
  - St. Louis – September 7

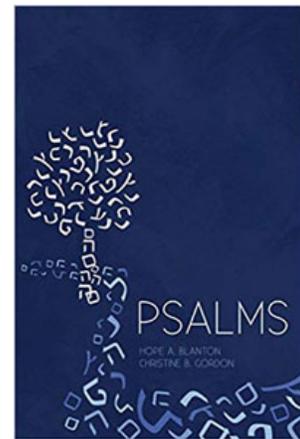
## New Studies This Fall:



[Even Better than Eden](#)



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