



# STUDY GUIDE

## **Ripened on the Vine Study Guide**

### **Acknowledgements**

**As I was sitting in a meeting one day, one of my Pastors suggested that I write a workbook to go along with the book I wrote, called “Ripened on the Vine”. It’s a true story about the trials, disappointments and infliction, one girl went through in her life. As soon as I heard my Pastor’s suggestion I was quickly reminded of many who over the years have read my book and asked if there was a workbook. Immediately, I started working on what you hold in your hands. But, to say I wrote the book would be taking far more credit than I deserve. It was inspired by God and it was encouraged through many people.**

**First, I would like to thank my Lord who has been cheering me on since I was conceived, who has never left me nor forsaken me. Thank you Lord, for seeing something in me that nobody else could see at the time you saw it. Thank you for breathing life back into a broken vessel, thank you for your restoration, hope, forgiveness, love, mercy, and your grace to live my life in a realm of expectancy.**

**Secondly, I would like to thank my husband, Marty who has demonstrated love, patience, along with uplifting words and encouragement to finish the work God has empowered me to do. Thank you for always being in my corner, and recognizing the call on my life.**

**Your reassurance has caused me to embrace the gifts living inside of me.**

**I love you.**

**Thirdly, I would like to thank my children who have so graciously shared their mother with a computer. Thank you for your gentle Spirits who in silence have stepped back many times to inspire the writer in me.**

**Lastly, I would like to thank Pastor Carlo who has been an encourager in my life since the day I met him. Thank you for your wisdom and guidance through my process of growth.**

## **Introduction**

**Ripened on the Vine Study Guide is a tool to be used among the broken hearted to emerge hope in the hopeless, and to restore restoration to the souls of the neglected. My aspiration for you is by the time you finish the study you will have grown in ways you never knew you needed to grow, that you would be planted firmly in the word of God without excuses, but with boundaries used as a hedge of protection. I pray for a complete and divine healing in your life. To freely forgive as you are freely forgiven (Amos 3:3) do two walk together unless they agree to meet? (Mark 11:25) and when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that you're Father in heaven may forgive you your sins. According to the scriptures if we are to walk together with God we must forgive those who have violated, hurt, abused, or tormented us in any way. I don't want you to enter into the study under the false illusion that the questions being asked are healing question but used as a tool that will eventually lead you to the healer Himself. I want the time you spend reflecting to make a difference in your life, to make a lasting change that will effect generations to come. I want you to examine yourself in such a way that there is no emotion undiscovered, no pain gone without being dissected at the foot of the cross, no tear uncried, no secret left to manifest itself in or through misplaced emotions. My deep desire is for you to be healed through the working power of Jesus' Resurrection to walk freely through your life not as a prisoner who visits among the imprisoned but like a citizen of the righteous, a resident of the kingdom of God, a self proclaimed advocate for the power of the blood of our Christ Jesus.**

**I want to take the opportunity to explain some of the sections in my workbook.**

**Word Focus: the word focus section is where I have highlighted a word or words to focus on in each chapter along with the definition to bring life and meaning to your study.**

**Proverb: The proverb section is Proverbs the Lord has given me over the years, tidbits of wisdom to pass on to you.**

**Faith Builder:** What is a *faith builder*? Throughout “Ripened on the Vine” book I would tell stories about incidents in my life which had the potential to build my faith or tear it down. For example when my youngest daughter was accidentally poisoned I felt the Holy Spirit prompting me to look inside the trashcan and read the label of what I had just given her. It was medicine, which was only to be put inside a ventilator not to be digested orally. I immediately called poison control and we rushed her to the hospital. Dakota had her stomach pumped the doctor said there was no damage. Dakota is now a high school graduate, she is a talented, beautiful young lady. This is what I refer to as *faith builders* had the Holy Spirit not have encouraged me to look inside the trashcan I would have laid Dakota down into her coffin. The *faith builder* section is a place where you are challenged to write your own *faith builder* prompted by a question I ask.

**Tahitian Well:** A Tahitian well is a well that never runs dry. This is a place where you can dig deeper where extra interesting facts and statements are added for a better working knowledge of the lesson you are working in. It is a place where I promote the idea to go as deep into the topic as you are willing to go and stay there as long as you are willing to stay.

**Prayer:** Prayer is the section where I challenge you to pray a prayer of faith that pacifically talks about the lesson, which you have just digested.

**Additional Notes:** I designed this area for you to look back with an honest eye and record what you learned in the lesson. This is where you explore how God spoke to you and what you heard Him say. This area is a great place to keep notes on your growth experience and a gentle reminder of what you explored in yourself through the lesson.

What you learn from this study completely depends upon you and how honest and real you’re willing to be with yourself and maybe others. It will depend on the effort you are willing to supply and the pride you are willing to let die. It is about growing, changing, and excepting where you are but not be willing to stay there. It’s about scaling back the pain of your past with the instrument of forgiveness; it’s also about tearing down walls to get to what’s behind the pain. If you are willing to set aside your own agenda to walk on the path of your healing then great success awaits you my friend...

All translations of the bible have been taken out of the NIV and the ESV .

# Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

## Lesson One

### 1. Fill in the blanks: John 10:10

The \_\_\_\_\_ comes only to \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, I have come that they may have \_\_\_\_\_, and have it to the \_\_\_\_\_.

### 2. List the three things Satan has come to do.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. What has God come to do according to John 10:10?

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### 4. Name three things Satan has tried to steal from you or has stolen from you.

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

### 5. Mark the statement True or False:

\_\_\_\_\_ Satan tries to sets traps.

### 6. Read 1Timothy 3:7

Read 2 Timothy 2:26

**I want to address three traps Satan sets for us:**

- 1. The mouse trap**
- 2. The lion trap**
- 3. The ape trap**

**The first trap is a mouse trap: The mouse trap has been baited with whatever bait will work on you. If it is the bait of distraction, then let's take a look at technology we have everything from home phones to cell phones, to face book to texting, twitter and Skype. We have desk tops, lap tops, television, iPods', and radio. Technology has bombarded our society it has overwhelmed our minds and thoughts. In many ways it has helped us stay connected with people but in other ways it has distracted us from the very throne room of God. For an example I have heard of many adultery incidents that have started out on face book. It starts out innocent enough you find an old flame on face book and ask to be his or her friend they except you start reminiscing and then one day you find yourself anticipating messages from your old flame, you start desiring to see your old flame, you start wondering how your life would have been different had you taken a different path. One thing leads to another and you find yourself meeting for dinner. At first the distraction starts in your mind and soon after your body follows. This is exactly what happened to Eve in the Garden of Eden, she ended up at the forbidden tree because her mind went there first. The trap of distraction is a dangerous trap its small, non abrasive, sneaks in most of the time without being noticed it is hidden in a dark area like a mouse trap where the bait sits undisturbed until the right situation presents itself, then out of what appears to be nowhere you have been caught in the trap of adultery.**

**As the bait changes the victims remain the same God's precious children.**

**Another piece of bait that can be found in the mouse trap is, "I can't bait," I can't get a job, I can't lose weight, I can't stay in my marriage, I can't cook, I can't hear from God, I can't read my bible. Listen to me, it's not that you can't do these things it's because you won't. You won't lose weight, you won't work on your marriage, you won't cook, and you won't read your bible. The truth is you won't make time to spend with God or read your bible. You have to prioritize your life. If it is important to you, you will find the time. The time it takes for you to look for an excuse is the only time the enemy needs to give you one.**

**Make a commitment and make a plan today that whatever the cost you will dedicate time to the Lord every day. Get a plan to lose the weight. Seek council for your marriage. Spend as much time looking for a job as you would if you were working at a job. Take some cooking lessons. Do not bite off on the bait of, "I can't."**

**What are three ways you can spend time with God?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Name three people who could mentor you with your marriage.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**List three attributes you have to qualify for job opportunities.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

**What are some ways you could expand your growth in the kitchen?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

Now let's approach the bait of age. So many are distracted from becoming older. We are focused on our age instead of the wisdom that comes with age. The trap is set with doubt, insecurities, and fear of becoming old. For women this can be one of the most tremendous traps set for us. One day we wake up and realize we are not twenty-one anymore, we start allowing ourselves to be distracted by our smile lines, our frown lines, our aging lines and then we no longer see the beauty within because we are distracted by what use to be our youth. Satan uses this distraction in such a perverted way he tries to convince vulnerable women to start dressing twenty, acting twenty, talking like their twenty which the outcome is more devastating than the reality that you are not twenty. You start entertaining younger men and younger friends all in the attempt to be what you are not. The reason why I say Satan uses this in the most perverted way is because we should be celebrating our age. Have you ever heard someone say I can't do that I am too old?

Name one thing you said in the last year that you could not do because of your age.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Today is the youngest you will ever be so go ahead and do something you thought you were too old to do. Let's enjoy the age we are instead of mourning the age we were.

The next trap is the lions trap: The lions trap is made by digging a whole then putting stakes at the bottom and camouflaging the hole. As the lion is roaming through the woods he suddenly with absolutely no warning falls in the hole and is devoured by death. This trap is set cleverly it masquerades in the light and in the darkness of deception; it disguises itself as innocent as the leaves which cover the stakes. It's not what it appears to be.... Who are the people who get caught in this trap? People who are in denial of the offense they have taken against a church, a friend, a relative, or co-worker. The people I am talking about are the people who have said with their own mouth they have forgiven but their actions say something completely different. They have taken offense, then they say they forgive, which is deception, which leads to strife. I address un-forgiveness in a later chapter in detail so I will leave you with a thought. If you are forgiven for any and everything you do then shouldn't you extend the same grace? You might say, "Well I never raped anybody or molested anyone or committed adultery. I never stole anything or

**did drugs. Yes, you may be able to say all of this and much more and it may very well be the truth but even if you would have done all of those things you still would have been forgiven. That is called the grace of God and grace is no respecter of person or situation.**

**Name one thing that someone could do to you that is unforgivable.**

**1. \_\_\_\_\_**

**Now go to your bible and look up the scripture that backs up what you're unwilling to forgive.**

**The last trap I want to discuss is the Wild African Ape trap: The trap is a large cage with a banana hanging from the inside of the door; the cage is shut and locked so it then forces the Ape to grab the banana from the outside of the cage. Once the Ape has grabbed the banana he will not let go, the hunter comes up behind the Ape and hits him on top of the head. Strangely enough the Ape would have lived if he would have just let go of the banana. Here is where it becomes interesting many of us have let Satan come in and distract us with a banana, (our past) and we won't let go we will not lay down what is behind us to become a new creation. We are holding onto our old nature. We let Satan remind us daily where we came from in the natural, but we have been born into a new family, a new generation, a new way of living, we are no longer slaves to this life but heirs to the kingdom of God.**

**Fill in the blanks: 2 Corinthians 5:17**

**Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he \_\_\_\_\_ a new \_\_\_\_\_; the old has \_\_\_\_\_, the new has \_\_\_\_\_!**

**Who is anyone? You are anyone, you have been born again, you are a new creation now walk in it. Do not hold onto the banana and let Satan hit you over the head. When Satan tries to remind you of your pass remind him who you are in Christ.**





# Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

## Lesson Two

### 1. Turn to 2 Corinthians 7:1 Fill in the blanks:

Since we have these \_\_\_\_\_, dear friends, let us \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves from everything that \_\_\_\_\_ body and \_\_\_\_\_, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God.

### 2. Write down some things that could contaminate your body and Spirit.

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Pornography could contaminate your body and Spirit by first getting into your mind then acting out through your body. Pornography is nothing but a snare of the enemy. It is a drug the enemy uses to distract you from reality. It is a fantasy. It is a subtle invasion of your mind. It preys on the weak and the strong alike it hides behind magazine covers, its reflection is seen on the big screen and the computer screen, its on our street corners and our bill boards, its in our grocery stores, and in our drug stores, its on the minds of the un-godly and on the minds of the godly. Pornography is no respecter of person it absolutely has no boundaries it does not exclude children, women, or men. It will stalk you and capture your thoughts as it draws you with its false sense of dominion. Pornography has become one of the choice drugs in America. It captivates then retaliates against you. You are only in it in the moment but once the moment has escaped you, you are left with the guilt, condemnation, humiliation, and isolation.

I have counseled a few in this area and I am warning you the only result from this sexual sin against yourself and others is a life lived in secret, torment, and disappointment. I believe many child molesters started out with some kind of pornography and once the images were not valid or vivid enough the perpetrator had to indulge more in depth. Once the act of watching became boring the watcher had to increase the stakes this is where I believe the porn watcher becomes our sex offenders it's in between the lie of innocent looking to the offense of acting. It's between the mind and the body. It imprisons you and the only way of escape is to expose the darkness to light.

In Chapter two of "Ripened on the Vine," on page 12 a man took my purity, stole my innocents, and replaced it with shame, confusion, and fear. He in essence contaminated my body with his own impurity. It was a day that has been so itched in my mind it was as if someone used an exactor knife to ensure my remembrance on the very day, hour, and event. The cut was so extravagant the wound was laid wide open for the world to see. Nothing could hide the scar it embedded in my mind, nothing could replace the pain I endured, and nothing could escape my own thoughts while living the day set before me. It was a memory I would take everywhere I went, it was with me when I woke up, and my companion when I laid my head down for rest. The wound itself would heal but the scar lasted until the day I choose to forgive. Forgiveness begins removing the bandages after the removal the breathing process begins the air surrounded the wounds of my past and gave life to what was lifeless.

**Forgiveness is where your healing will begin it's in this moment you recognize even your abuser desires to be released from their torment even if you never hear them acknowledge their sin.**

**3. Look up and read (Mark 11:22-25) if you want to be a mountain mover what do you need to do first?**

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**4. Mark the following statement True or False:** \_\_\_\_\_ Will God forgive you if you choose not to forgive? What does the Bible say about forgiveness? Release the power that un-forgiveness has on you; unlock the handcuffs with the key of forgiveness. Pg.12 in ROTV ( Ripened on the Vine)

**5. Do you know someone who is struggling with pornography? If so, discuss how you could help, discuss what resources are available in your area.**

**Memorize: Romans 12:2 (a) do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.**

**Word Focus:**

**Forgiveness:** to pardon or acquit of sins, acquittal.

**Purity:** Pure from defilement, not contaminated

**Renewing:** to restore; to make new spiritual

**Proverb:** *Sin is looking for an opportunity to express itself through you, but self-denial always gives God the Glory.*

**Faith Builder:** Write down a time when someone violated you, did the violation become your *faith builder?*

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# Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

## Lesson Three

### 1. Turn to Genesis 50:20 Fill in the blank:

Genesis 50:20 you \_\_\_\_\_ to harm me, but \_\_\_\_\_ intended it for good to \_\_\_\_\_ what is now being done, the saving of many \_\_\_\_\_.

### 2. Write down three incidents in your life that Satan meant for harm that God turned around for good.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Did you allow those incidents to build your faith or tear it down?**

### 3. what has been trying to hold you hostage, or place you in prison?

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**Write down what Psalm 146:7 says about prisoners.**

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**4. Match the following scriptures with the correct Bible verse.**

**He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free.**

**Luke 4:18**

**To open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.**

**Psalms 146:7**

**I needed clothes and you clothe me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison you came to visit me.**

**Psalms 142:7**

**Set me free from my prison that I may praise your name.**

**Isaiah 42:7**

**The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed,**

**Matthew 25:36**

Many of us live in a man made prison made out of bad discussions, wrong choices, and generational curses. God's word says he has come to give food to the hungry, clothes to the naked, eyes to the blind, light to the life that lives in darkness, to release the oppress so we can Praise His name and proclaim freedom. Some of us are only one choice away from being locked in a prison where Satan proclaims defeat, depression, discouragement, and dysfunction.

**5. What are some decisions you can make today to start tearing down your man made prison?**

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**Word Focus:**

**Prison:** a place of bonds

**Prisoner:** captive, captives in war, the person bound.

**Hostage:** a person given to or taken by an enemy and held prisoner until certain things are done.

**Oppressed:** distress, to exercise power over.

**Freedom:** to go wherever one likes, freedom from restraints, righteousness

**Recovery:** to save, healing, restoration of health, to return to soberness, as from a state of delirium, to be well.

**Proverb:** *Is the truth you believe dressed in a suit of lies?*

**Faith Builder:**

In Chapter three as I was seeking the face of God to help my step dad find the lost drug money I realized either God was going to intervene or someone was going to get seriously hurt. I fell asleep with complete peace because I knew God could hear me and if he could hear me he could help me. Write down one of your own *faith builder*, write about a time you were desperate for God to hear you what He did and how He came through for you?

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**Tahitian Well: We have a choice to be in prison or to be set free.**

Galatians 4: 3-7, Galatians 4:9, Galatians 5:1, Hebrews 2:15 Matthew 12:30

**Pray this prayer:** *I am free from the prison Satan has tried to establish for me. I walk in the freedom to serve my God to accomplish His will for my life. I will not bend down, sell out, be distracted, let go, compromise, or settle on anything that is not of God. I will stay focused, keep my eyes on Jesus walk the narrow road, and shake off the old while renewing my mind with the word of God. I will not bow down to the ways of this world but I will lift myself up to the higher standard of life to be a light in the darkness, and a hope for the future generation in the name of Jesus Amen.*



# Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

## Lesson Four

### 1. Fill in the blanks: NIV Romans 8:13 -14

For if you live according to the \_\_\_\_\_ nature, you will die; but if by the \_\_\_\_\_ you put to death the \_\_\_\_\_ of the body, you will \_\_\_\_\_, because those who are \_\_\_\_\_ by the Spirit of God.

It seemed like the people who came and went in my life were filled mostly with a spirit of death. Each choice made with a desire to please the flesh. Instant gratification instead of dealing with their problems they let their problems deal them a hand of destruction, me included at times. No man is an island unto himself every decision you make effects everyone around you. This simple but yet apparently complex reality seemed to be an unapproachable unrealistic idea, a fantasy thought at best. It seemed that many who came and went in my life was living in complete denial of what their actions might do to another human being. As we read earlier in **Romans 8:13 for if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live.** Here is the key we must put the misdeeds of the body to death. Look what happened to Eve as I've mentioned before, the minute Eve let Satan into her mind she went to the tree. "Did God really say?" Genesis 3:1 How many times have you fallen for the same line? Did God really say do not do anything that would cause another man to stumble? 1 Corinthians 10:32 Did God really say to give money to the poor? Did God rally say He would never leave or forsake you? Did God really say do not eat of the fruit off the forbidden tree? **What would be the forbidden tree in your life?**

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**2. What have you opened your mind to that eventually your body followed?**

It could be a thought of having a drink when you know that there is a problem in that area of your life. It could be shopping when you know that the credit cards are already max out and you're already in debt. It could be a pill used as a crutch to medicate your pain. It could also be the addition to the distractions in your life. With all the new technology it is easy to loose yourself among the dead. We must take our temperature in these areas of our lives to make sure we are living in a healthy place of maturity. Walking our walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh will usher you in among the living.

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**3. Mark the statement True or False according to Romans 6:6-7 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin. Because, anyone who has died has been freed from sin.**

\_\_\_\_\_ We are free from the power of sin.

**4. In Peter 1 5:8 fill in the blanks**

Be self- controlled and \_\_\_\_\_. Your enemy the \_\_\_\_\_ prowls around like a roaring lion \_\_\_\_\_ for someone to devour.

**5. Have you ever had a time in your life when you agreed with the enemy of your soul, if you can't beat them, join them? What have you self medicated yourself with?**

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**6. Memorize: Romans 6:23 for the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

**7. Mark the following statement True or False**

\_\_\_\_\_ Satan comes to kill, steal and destroy. He deceives you into thinking that his way of life is more fun, more exciting and that you will be more popular, but what he forgets to tell you is not only can you die living this kind of life, but others around you also can be infected, affected, damaged or die in the process by the choices you made . Pages 27-28 in, “Ripened on the Vine.”

**John 3:20 “Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes onto the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”**

**8. We all have rooms in our house that if company stopped by unexpected we would shut the door on some of the rooms as if to say these rooms are off limits they are not tidy enough they still have work to be done. If God stopped by unexpected what might he find behind the closed doors? Would one of them be filled piled high with UN forgiveness? Or would some of them be full of shame and guilt, maybe others would be filled with regrets and disappointments. Write down what some of you’re closed off rooms are filled with.**

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**Word Focus:**

**Light:** daytime, brightness, illumination; exposure to truth

**Darkness:** devoid of light, nightfall, blackened in the spiritual terms, secret, closed or blinded

**Life:** period from birth to death, vitality, and spiritual existence transcending death, salvation.

**Sin:** violation of conscience, or of divine law, missing the mark; falling short of God’s perfect standard

**Proverb:** *Choices are for the living.*



**Prayer:**

*Lord, Help me walk in light allow the darkness to be expelled by your presence Replace death with life, curses with blessings. Allow me to live a life of forgiveness to walk by your example, to live by your wisdom and to extend grace when grace is needed. Place my feet in someone else's shoes if only for a moment so I can feel the compassion I need to feel for forgiveness. Let me see through the eyes of Jesus; let me recognize my own shortcomings so I can be aware of my own need of forgiveness and salvation in the name of Jesus. Amen*

**Additional Notes: How did God speak to you in lesson four? What did you learn?**

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## Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

### Lesson Five

#### Turn to II Corinthians 6:14-16 NIV Fill in the Blanks:

1. Do not be \_\_\_\_\_ together with unbelievers. For what do \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ have in common? Or what fellowship can \_\_\_\_\_ have with \_\_\_\_\_? What harmony is there between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_? What does a believer have in common with a \_\_\_\_\_? What agreement is there between the \_\_\_\_\_ of God and \_\_\_\_\_?

The Apostle Paul is not talking about isolating ourselves from nonbelievers see in 1Corinthians 5:9-10. In Addition, Paul even recommends that spouses stay in their commitment. But, on the other hand I believe the Apostle Paul is warning Christians not to get in an unequally yoked relationship. Why? Many reasons come to mind but the one that permeates the loudest is domestic violence. I am not saying that a Christian man or women cannot become violent, but it happens more times than not with the unsaved than the saved. For example; re-read pages 38 and 39 in chapter five of “Ripened on the Vine.”

On page 39 the fourth paragraph I wrote, “The next day he would apologize and I would forgive him until the next time. I knew as long as I was with this man there would be a next time.”

Many women as I did believe we will be the ones who change the abuser, the womanizer, the drug addict, the adulteress, the hot tempered the wounded, the abused, the liar, the ungodly, and the hopeless. We are called the rescuers; our syndrome is we will fight through a crowded room full of nice guys to get to the back of the room to the one who needs a savior. The only problem with this behavior is we put ourselves in Gods rightful position we think we will change them when in fact the only one with the power for lasting change is the Holy Spirit; he is the one who convicts. Anyone can change for a season but when God changes you it’s for eternity.

2. What do you consider abuse? Discuss your answers aloud. It's good for other women to hear what others view to be abusive.

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If you are being abused now, do you think you deserve it, and why?

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Signs of abusive relationship; possessiveness, tells you how to dress, how to wear your make-up or if you can wear make-up, stalks you, controls who you are friends with, follows you, he does not like you talking to anyone else, highly jealous.

**3. Mark the following statement True or False** \_\_\_\_\_ According to 11 Corinthians 6:14 Light can have fellowship with darkness?

The only way light can enter into darkness is through entering into an organic relationship with Jesus. Many resources have been designed to save people for example; life preservers can save drowning victims, medicine can save heart patients, diabetics, cancer patients, and psychologist can save a mental person. Technology has come a long way in the way of contributing to society's well being but Jesus is the only one who can save without the boundaries of death.





## Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

### Lesson Six

#### 1. Fill in the blanks: 1 Kings 18:21

Elijah went before the people and said, “How \_\_\_\_\_ will you \_\_\_\_\_ between two \_\_\_\_\_? If the Lord is God, \_\_\_\_\_ him; but if \_\_\_\_\_ is God, \_\_\_\_\_ him.”

How long will we limp between two opinions? I know in chapter six I was in a state of confusion. I wanted to live right. I wanted to make the right decisions but I did not have enough educated information. I mimicked my past. I felt like I studied for the wrong test. I went through the wrong courses; I believe a lie instead of the truth. Looking back I let my mind live in a house whom the architect was the enemy. I let him build my mind with each distorted memory. I allowed deception to be the throne where my heart rested. I allowed myself to limp between the world’s opinion and God’s. How long would I limp between two opinions? How long will you?

#### Read 1 Kings 18: 21-39

**Elijah went before the people and said, “How long will you limp between two opinions? If the Lord is God, follow him, but if Baal is God, follow him.” But the people said nothing. Then Elijah said to them, “I am the only one of the Lord’s prophets left, but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. Get two bulls for us. Let them choose one for themselves, and let them cut up into pieces and put it on the wood but do not set fire to it. Then you can call on the name of your god, and I will call on the name of the Lord. The god who answer by fire-----he is God. Then all the people said, “What you say is good.”**

**Elijah said to the prophets of Baal, “Choose one of the bulls and prepare it first, since there are so many of you. Call on the name of your god, but do not light the fire. So they took the bull given them and prepared it. Then they called on the name of Baal from morning**

till noon. “O Baal, answer us!” they shouted. But there was no response; no one answered. And they danced around the altar they had made.

At noon Elijah began to taunt them. “Shout louder!” He said. “Surely he is a god! Perhaps he is in deep thought, or busy, or traveling. Maybe he is sleeping and must be awakened.” So they shouted louder and slashed themselves with swords and spears, as was their custom, until their blood flowed. Midday passed, and they continued their frantic prophesying until the time for the evening sacrifice. But there was no response, no one answered, and no one paid attention.

Then Elijah said to all the people, “Come her to me” They came to him, and he repaired the altar of the Lord, which was in ruins. Elijah took twelve stones one for each of the tribes descended from Jacob, to whom the word of the Lord had come, saying, “Your name shall be Israel.” With these stones he built an altar in the name of the Lord, and he dug a trench around it large enough to hold two seahs of seed. He arranged the wood, cut the bull into pieces and laid it on the wood. Then he said to them, “Fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and on the wood.” Do it again,” he said, and they did it again. “Do it a third time,” he ordered, and they did it the third time. The water ran down around the altar and even filled the trench.

At the time of sacrifice, the prophet Elijah stepped forward and prayed: “O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, let t be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer, O Lord, answer me, so these people will know that you O Lord, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again.” Then the fire of the Lord fell and burned up the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, and the soil, and also licked up the water in the trench. When all the people saw this, they fell prostrate and cried, “The Lord- he is God! The Lord—he is God!”

There are several signs that you might be living for the world more than for God. Examine yourself to see if you are guilty of any of theses actions and if you are repent and turn from your sin.

1. You limp on your beliefs depending on whom you are with. If you're with someone who believes in gambling then you believe in it as well. If you are with someone who believes in drinking then that's what you believe. If you are with someone who does not believe in speaking in tongues then you reserve your prayer language for another day. You are tossed to and fro with every doctrine. Vs. 21

Where can you find the scripture: he is a double-minded man, and unstable in all his ways.

Book and verse \_\_\_\_\_

2. You call on other names besides God to solve your problems. When pressure comes you go out for a drink, or you take a pill, or maybe you medicate yourself with the pleasures of food or sleep your troubles away. You serve every worldly god to help you but the one true God. You pick up your dink and solute the god of your numbness. Maybe you grab your god of fast food and bow your head to the god of obesity, or maybe you unscrew a pill bottle and pop the god of your denial. Vs.24

Where can you find in the scripture "You shall have no other gods before me?"

Book and verse \_\_\_\_\_

3. You dance around your altar; your joy is found in worldly things. Your joy is depended upon the moment and after the moment has gone you are un-moved. Things bring you joy, not God. Your circumstances dictate your mood, your faith level, and your attitude. You speak joy for moments that do not last. Vs.26

**Fill in the blanks: Psalm 16:11**

You have made known to me the \_\_\_\_\_ of life; you will fill me with \_\_\_\_\_ in you \_\_\_\_\_, with eternal pleasures at you \_\_\_\_\_ hand.

4. Your hurting yourself ,it is your custom; it is your way of life. Are you hurting yourself by not recognizing the one true God in your life, which can take on a number of outward appearances like an eating disorder; obese, anorexia, or bulimia maybe you cut your self to

relieve the pain of your past. Another popular way to inflict pain on yourself is through self loathing when you look in the mirror all you say or think is negative things, if you are struggling with your weight you might let the enemy have a voice who will say things like your fat, your disgusting, how can anyone stand to look at you, how can your husband want to be with you. If your struggling with self image you might let the same voice come in and tell you all the things that are wrong with you physically. Vs. 28

**Memorize: Psalm 139:14**

**I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, and I know that full well.**

To know who you are in Christ is freeing, its librating knowing that you were formed and made in the full knowledge of the Lord. We do not get our value from our jobs, cars, houses, physically, but from the throne room of God.

Name three things you have tried to get your value from.

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5. You feel like no one is listening your shouting to false Gods. You feel your all alone, lost because eventually the things we try from the world will leave us empty and shouting for more, trying to wake up our false gods. We search, look, examine everything we know of this world but it has no response, no answer, and no one to really pay attention because we have placed our faith in the atmosphere of the world. We have become best friends with things instead of God, we have served our jobs, our talents, our selves, but we have failed to serve God. Now when the world turns its back on us we are left with our misguided thoughts and hasty decisions. We resort to prophesying into our own lives but the problem with this solution is we have been in an

intimate relationship with the world therefore even our own opinion is shaded with the color of the worlds mind and the worlds view on right or wrong. If you had to draw a picture of yourself would the church recognize you? In other words do you look one way for your church friends and another way for the world?

Let's look at what scripture says about who you are in Christ. This is the place you can find your value in the word of God.

**Match each scripture reference with the correspondence to who you are in Christ**

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| a. I am a child of God                                    | Colossians 2:9-10     |
| b. I have been justified                                  | Colossians 1:13-14    |
| c. I have been bought with a price<br>and I belong to God | John 1:12             |
| d. I have been chosen by God and<br>adopted as His child  | Ephesians 1:3-8       |
| e. I have been redeemed and<br>Forgiven of all my sins    | Romans 5:1            |
| f. I am a citizen of heaven                               | 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 |
| g. I am complete in Christ                                | Philippians 3:20      |

In other words you are a child of God who has been justified, bought with a price, adopted from the world, redeemed, forgiven, and complete in Christ and now you are a citizen of Heaven.

Wow! That's good news there is no reason we need to offer up false gods, to limp between two opinions, to find our value in the world, or to call on any other name but the name of Jesus.

**BE STRONG, TAKE COURAGE. DON'T BE INTIMADATED. DON'T GIVE THEM A SECOND THOUGHT BECAUSE GOD, YOUR GOD, IS STRIDING AHEAD OF YOU. HE'S RIGHT THERE WITH YOU. HE WON'T LET YOU DOWN; HE WON'T LEAVE YOU." DEUTERONOMY 31:6** (message translation)

In the book my boyfriend gave me a shirt with his name on it. The shirt said, SHE'S TAKEN, I thought that was sweet. Now God can write that on my shirt. I belong to Christ and He belongs to me. And I will admit the shirt and the boyfriend gave me a false sense of security. I really liked the idea of belonging to somebody, anybody at times. The only way we will not allow false securities to creep into our lives is by knowing who we are in Christ.

Satan would love for us to believe the lie of false security, rather than having our security built in God alone. Write down things people use as false securities rather than being secured in God.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_

**WORD FOCUS:**

**Strong:** Spiritual strong: firm in the faith, able to withstand all the crafty schemes of Satan and the spiritual forces of evil what you seek has never been lost.

**Double-minded:** "two-souled"

**Altar:** to sacrifice used for idols

**Redeemed:** to buy, to buy out,

**Waver:** without bending

**Proverb:** *What you seek has never been lost*





## Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

### Lesson Seven

#### 1. Fill in the blanks: Mathew 7:7

Jesus says to \_\_\_\_\_ and it will be given to you; \_\_\_\_\_ and you will find; \_\_\_\_\_ and the door will be opened to you.

I want to dissect this scripture to really find out what a few of these words mean. The first word is the word “ask,” when God tells us to ask He means ask not beg, plead, or borrow. We do not need to beg God to heal us he desires to heal us. We do not need to beg God for a job God’s desire is also for us to have a job. In addition we do not need to beg God to forgive us he wants and desires to forgive us as well. The Greek word for ask is, *aiteo* which means to be adamant in requesting and demanding assistance to meet our needs such as food, money, and shelter. *Aiteo* also means that you believe with expectancy.

So in other words, when we knock we should not be on the other side of the door thinking God might answer, or he might not. We in turn should not be knocking with the attitude of desperation, or begging God to answer, while standing outside his door banging, hollering, please God answer, please God can you hear me, let me in. We can boldly go into his presence knowing full well that God wants the best for us; he is not withholding his goodness. How are you asking God? Is it with faith and assurance or with doubt and unbelief?

The next word I want to look at is the word seeks. The Greek word for seek is *zeteo* it describes a fierce determination to have something or to become something.

Are you fiercely determined to find what you are looking for? How do you look, is it with a lazy ambition? Are you looking just for a moment and then give up? Do you look with the eyes of the world or with your spiritual eyes? Have you given up before you have found what you have been seeking? If you’re looking for deliverance in an area of your life how far are you willing to look? What steps have you taken to get there?

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I know in chapter seven of my book my mom was always seeking but never finding. She was fiercely determined to find happiness in the world, but never found it. She found a life of drugs, alcohol, and abuse. She found destruction rather than peace, she found helplessness rather than hope, she found depression, rather than joy, she found herself dying while wanting to live.

**2. True or False:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Can you be fiercely determined to find the wrong thing in your life?

What have you found that you wish you could give back?

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The last word I would like to examine is the word knock in the Greek translation it is pronounced *krouo* according to Matthew 7:7 knock is referring to the importance of dealing with God. Your knock determines your result. For an example if you barely tap on the door you are uncertain of the God behind it, therefore you're asking, and seeking, will be limited by your own lack of faith. If you knock but then take a few steps back, you really want God to answer, even hoping he will, but you are not sold on the idea that he will open the door, therefore you're asking, and seeking is always approach with a knock of doubt. But if you are boldly knocking as if you know someone is home and in turn expect him to answer your asking, and your seeking is fueled by the power of belief then wide is the door.

**3. What is your method of knocking on God's door? What has been your results lately?**

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**4. Name three ways to seek God.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Name three times you sought God and found him in a powerful way explain.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

After each experience what did you learn about who God is that you did not know before, a new attribute, a new name, for example; God my Jehovah, which means (my provider) God my Nissi which means (the Lord is my banner.) Or you might have gotten to know God as El Roi, (God who sees), or Yahwah Shalom, (The Lord is Peace)

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Circle who you still need God to be in your life?

Name of God:

Meaning:

- |                         |                        |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Elohim               | God                    |
| 2. Yahweh               | The Lord               |
| 3. El Elyon             | God most high          |
| 4. El Roi               | God who sees           |
| 5. El Shaddai           | God Almighty           |
| 6. Yahweh Yireh         | The Lord will Provide. |
| 7. Yahweh Nissi         | The Lord is my Banner. |
| 8. Adonai               | Lord                   |
| 9. Yahweh Elohe Yisrael | Lord God of Israel     |

**10. Yahweh Shalom**

**The Lord is Peace.**

**11. Qedosh Yisrael**

**Holy one of Israel**

**12. Yahweh Sabaoth**

**Lord of Host**

**13. El Olam**

**Everlasting God**

**14. Yahweh Tsidkenu**

**The Lord is our Righteousness.**

**15. Yahweh Shammah**

**The Lord is There.**

**16. Attiq Yomin**

**Ancient of Days**

**Word Focus:**

**Ask:** to seek information

**Seek:** To look for earnestly; try to find or get something, craving

**Knock:** a hard loud blow; rap

**Proverb:** *What you seek has never been lost only waiting to be discovered.*

**Faith Builder:** When was there a time in your life God answered the door of your request and it became a *faith builder* in your life; a time you might even look back on now and are encouraged.

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**The Tahitian Well:** When we ask for something we use our mouths to form the words, which then turn into the sentences, we verbalize our request with. Our words are so important God made us use words to confess our faith, God also form the entire world with his words. Salvation starts with your words then ends with your heart. In our study Matthew 7:7 says, ask first then seek then knock. Our words carry power for the good or bad. I want to share a true story about a man who worked on a train who transported frozen food. On evening the train had stopped for the night as the man went into the frozen compartment of the train to check on everything before locking up the door shut and locked behind him. As he was locked inside the freezer he started verbalizing how cold he was over and over after several hours in the freezer he began to write a good-bye letter to his family upon the boxes in the freezer department where he was trapped. He described how cold his hands were and how he could barely feel his legs, while writing he explained how he could feel his life leaving his body. As he addressed each one of his children then his wife, he expressed the agony he was in and how the pain was unbearable at times. He kept writing with great detail until his very last breath was taken. The next morning the other men opened the freezer compartment and noticed that their friend was dead. They began to read the horrible description of how he froze to death, the only thing they could not figure out was how he froze because somehow the freezer had been unplug the night before the temperature inside was only about 60 degrees.

The power of your words have life or death attached to them this man convinced himself that he was freezing to death and although the temperature was 60 degrees the autopsy confirmed that he



# Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

## Lesson Eight

**1. Fill in the blanks:** Romans 7:15 I do not \_\_\_\_\_ what I do. For what I \_\_\_\_\_ to do I do not \_\_\_\_\_, but what I hate I \_\_\_\_\_.

Our flesh rages war against our spirit but our flesh has been crucified according to Romans 6:6. Many times throughout my life it seemed like Satan pulled me down from my cross only drag me around by my hair and condemn me for doing the very thing I did not want to do. I felt torn between life and death, victory and defeat, wisdom and ignorance. I felt my world getting smaller as Satan became life size. The very thing I tried to hide from became my existence. I accepted the fate of whomever I connected myself with.

**2. Mark the following statement true or false: Reference Romans 6:6**

Our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with?

\_\_\_\_\_

**Write 2 Corinthians 12:9 and Memorize.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The Apostle Paul was pleading for God to remove the thorn from his flesh, but God responded No, My grace is sufficient for you.

**3. What do you consider a thorn in your life? What might be your thorn?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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**Write down three areas in your life God's Grace has been sufficient enough for you.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Word Focus:**

**Flesh:** the human body, (spirit, soul, and body) the unregenerate state of man.

**Stronghold:** to make firm, fortress, Satan's power

**Deception:** to cheat, to deceive, giving a false impression,

**Deliverance:** to give back, to free from, to change from, to release from, the opponent being appeased and withdrawing his suit.



**Pray this prayer:**

*Lord, please take me to the areas in my life that I need to nail back to the cross. Give me the strength to take a stand on my beliefs to recognize the work of the enemy and to drawl upon your word. Allow the thorn in my life to point to your grace keep me humbled as I approach your presence and remind me daily that I have a right to choose you and follow through with that choice in the name of Jesus. Amen*

**Additional Notes: How did God speak to you Chapter Eight? What did you learn?**

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## Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

### Lesson Nine:

#### 1. Circle the correct answer after reading Isaiah 40:28-31

**Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He will not grow tired or weary, and His understanding no one can fathom. He gives strength to the weary, and young men stubble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength, They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.**

- a. The Lord is an everlasting God.
- b. God grows weary.
- c. God gives strength to the weary.
- d. Young men stubble.
- e. If you put your hope in the Lord He will renew your strength.
- f. You will run and grow weary.
- g. You will walk and not be faint.

Throughout my life God had proved himself to be faithful. I was finally making a choice to leave what was behind and move towards what lays a head.

#### 2. Fill in the blanks: NIV Philippians 3:13-14

Brothers, I do not \_\_\_\_\_ myself yet to have \_\_\_\_\_ hold of it. But one thing I do: \_\_\_\_\_ what is \_\_\_\_\_ and straining towards what is \_\_\_\_\_. I \_\_\_\_\_ on towards the \_\_\_\_\_ to win the price for which \_\_\_\_\_ has called me \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ Jesus.

**Name three areas in your life you need the desire to leave behind.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

I needed to leave behind my past, my abuser, my old nature, my habits, my way of thinking, my low self-esteem, my worldly views. Personally, I needed to actually pick up my mat and leave the State I was residing in to be healed of the pain I endured while living among the lost.

**3. Memorize: John 8:36 so, if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.**

I was free from the tormentors, the sex offenders, terrors of the night, drugs, alcohol, rapist, mental abuse, physical abuse, along with sexual abuse. I was free from the peer-pressure, fear of not fitting in, fear of the unknown, fear of the known, fear of death. I was free from fear itself.

**4. Mark the following statements True or False: Romans 8:31, Galatians 2:20**

\_\_\_\_\_ **If God is for me who can be against me?**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I have been crucified with Christ and I know longer live, but Christ lives in me. The live I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself to me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing.**

**Name three ways you can set aside the grace of God.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Word Focus:**

**Freedom:** liberty, freedom from restraint

**Unconditional:** not depending on any conditions; absolute, an unconditional guarantee, an unconditional surrender.

**Faithful:** to be trusted, reliable, active, believing

**Choice:** to pick out, select, to choose for one self, to call or name

**Salvation:** The spiritual and eternal deliverance granted immediately by God to those who accept His conditions of repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus, in whom alone it is to be obtained.

**Repentance:** implying change, the mind, and the seat of moral reflection. To change ones mind, to regret, to turn and go another way

**Proverb:** *The time it takes you to look for an excuse is all the time the enemy needs to give you one.*

**Faith Builder:**

One of the most difficult *faith builders* I had was trusting God’s Word which said, In John 8:36 if the Son sets you free you are free indeed. I knew what it said but I needed the faith to believe it. What is one of the most difficult scriptures for you to get in your spirit? What *faith builder* are you experiencing right now?

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**Tahitian Well:**

In the beginning of Chapter Nine I wrote a poem called “A moment Away”, many of us are only a moment away from our deliverance, a moment away from our miracle, a moment away from escaping Satan’s life sentence. I remember on page 87 when I wrote these words after I gave my life to the Lord, “I will never forget the peace that I felt. I had never known that feeling before. I am so happy that Jesus came to save the lost. I was preparing on the inside to be released from the prison I had accustomed myself to. I was ready for the papers to be signed and for the warden to release me. As I slowly walked away from the wreckage of my old life, I realized the electrical fence, which surrounded the prison I resided in no longer, had power connected to me. The warden that seemed so terrifying during my stay appeared fragile and weakened by my confession of Christ. It was at this time I was open to face the cross to accept my forgiveness as I forgave myself.”

**Look up and read these scriptures:**

Ephesians 6:17, Hebrews 1:14, 1 Peter 1:9, Hebrews 2:10, Romans 1:6, Isaiah 61:10, Jonah 2:9  
Romans 10:9

**Pray this prayer:**

**If you are not saved or you just want to renew your confession of faith please pray this prayer aloud:**

*I confess with my mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and I believe in my heart that God raised him from the dead. Lord, please forgive me of my sins, as I forgive those who have sinned against me. I confess I am a sinner and I am tired of living my life for myself. I want a lasting change. I'm tired of knowing you have written a script for my life and not recognizing my lines. Lord I need you and desire to have a personal relationship with you. Thank you for releasing me from my self made prison and allowing me the freedom to choose you in the of Jesus. Amen*

**Additional Notes: How did God speak to you in Chapter Nine? What did you learn?**

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## Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

### Chapter Ten

#### 1. Fill in the Blanks: Philippians 4:7

And the \_\_\_\_\_ of God, which \_\_\_\_\_ all \_\_\_\_\_.

Throughout this chapter of my life there were so many challenges that came my way. First of all, we were trying to have a baby, and then they thought my baby might be a tubule pregnancy which turned out not to be a tubule pregnancy. I gain 50 pounds, Marty's mom was diagnosed with cancer, we got pregnant again, Marty's mom died, I gave birth to Dakota my second child. I contracted a life threatening infection after the birth of Dakota and almost died. Dakota was accidentally poisoned and almost died. The peace I had in my life surpassed any human knowledge, it was simply the peace that could only come from above. God's timing was always perfect but never my timing. I learned a lot while being in the waiting room of God as I waited I ministered to the ones waiting along with me until my name was called. I learned how to hear His voice and heed His warnings. Looking back if everything would have happened like I planned, when I planned, and where I planned then I would have tried to take the credit for the out come. I wouldn't have had the chance to be still and listen for His voice or bid his calling.

#### 2. Memorize: Psalms 46:10 be still and know I am God:

**Zephaniah 3:17 The Lord your God is with you, he is mighty to save, he will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.**

#### 3. Mark the following statement True or False\_\_\_\_\_ We can be quieted with God's love?

The word still in Hebrew is "rafaw," which means mending, sewing, put back together, and making whole. When we are quite and still before God that is when He can mend us, heal us, restore what has been stolen and stitches us back to make us whole. You will never go into surgery without sedation nor will you ever be made whole without being quite and still before

God. How can we have peace during the storms of our lives? By knowing what Satan meant for harm God will turn around for the good and just knowing grace and mercy follow me everyday.

**4. Write: Isaiah 49:16**

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**Explain in your own words what Isaiah 49:16 means to you.**

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**Interesting fact:**

In Biblical times the Jewish mothers used to write their children’s name on the palm of their hands so throughout their day as they were working they would remember to pray for their children. In other words, the Hebrew women always had their children in the forefront of their thoughts as God also has us in the forefront of his thoughts.

**Word Focus:**

**Still:** without sound, without movement

**Trustworthy:** deserving to be trusted

**Time:** the present, and future; every moment there has ever been, or ever will be, the period between two events, or the period where something exists, a system of measuring the passing of hours.

**Wall:** shuts something in or divides something from another.



## My Air

When you were just a baby how would we know, through prayer and supplication how far you would go? The eyes of the Lord are upon you, watching each step you take, guiding you with His grace and mercy in the decisions you need to make. The road you travel will always lead back home, although you're on your own journey, you are not alone.

My precious child \_\_\_\_\_ my plan is plain to see, if you will keep your eyes out of the world and your heart connected to me. I have greatness in store for you my little friend. I have orchestrated your life; beginning, middle, and end.

When you were born, I was there breathing life into you. Your first breathe of air. When you started to speak I was there, helping you form your words with the same air. And when you began to walk again I was there, demanding the law of gravity, commanding the air. Your first day of school, I also was there encouraging you to take a deep breathe with the same air. As years went by skin knees and all I was there through it all. Then, Graduation Day was here, a celebration of the previous years. As you began to get ready again, I was there encouraging you once more just to breathe my air.

Not long from now you'll be packing your bags and walking up the stairs, but by now you know, I will also be there. Just take a deep breath my child and breathe my air

Now you're a young adult and all I can see, is the very breathe of life which came out of me.

Do not look back \_\_\_\_\_ the same air I shared in the beginning is the same air you breathe today.



## Ripened on the Vine Study Guide

### Lesson Eleven:

**1. Mark the following statement True or False after reading 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)  
Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone the new has come!**

If you are in Christ and He is in you are you created new? \_\_\_\_\_

Therefore, if we have been created new then I think not only our mind, body, and soul have been created in a brand new light, but our vocabulary, and thoughts should have been created new as well. I know the change does not happen all at once but the change should happen. Just as a baby starts to learn new words so we should also, for example truth, counselor, faith, and wisdom. As baby Christians we are just learning how to call on Jesus' name but as we grow in our walk we not only need to know how to call on His name but call on His power, His authority, and His promises. Some of you are stuck in your infant years when you should be in your toddler years, and some of you are stuck in your toddler years when you should be in your preteen years, while others of you are still stuck in your preteen years when you should be in your teenage years but for many of you the teenage years are where you can be found, the rebellion years. You want to be an adult but you do not want the responsibility that goes with the title. You are a new creation, and a new creation starts with being born but you must keep going through all the stages until you finally reach adulthood taking full responsibility for your actions, and faith journey. Something new must eventually become older. Where are you in years as far as being a Christian? \_\_\_\_\_. What stage are you in? \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Fill in the Blanks in Proverbs 12:18**

Reckless \_\_\_\_\_ pierce like a \_\_\_\_\_, but the \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ brings \_\_\_\_\_.

In Chapter Eleven the third paragraph on page 117 did you notice I would take one step forward in believing my foot would be healed while I took two steps backward due to my doubt and unbelief? It's like I stood right on the platform of unbelief. I had not made up my mind to fully trust in the Word of God. I was leaning on my own understanding what I could see, what I could hear from the Doctors. I was not giving my ears to God. The battle of unbelief had taken residence in my mind. I traded my healing for sickness, my peace for a spirit of confusion, my gratitude for grumbling, and my wisdom for ignorance. Why? Because, I traded the most valuable gift of all the truth for a lie.

**Read Romans 1:25**

**They exchange the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator---who is forever praised. Amen**

**3. Name four areas in your life that you have exchange the truth for a lie.**

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

d. \_\_\_\_\_

Remember in chapter eleven at the top of page 122 I told the story of how when we were traveling to California with our kids we had to drive in separate vehicles. One of the ways we communicated was with a Magna Doodle. We did not have a cell phone back then. If we were hungry we would write, "We are hungry," then I would speed up and the children would put the Magna Doodle in the window so their father could see and respond to our need.

**4. If you had a Magna Doodle what are some needs you would like God, your Father to respond to?**

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**5. Who is the Spirit of truth to you? Read John 14:15- “if you love me you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever ----the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him, for he lives with you and will be in you.**

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**Read Deuteronomy 11:18-21 Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that the days of your children may be many in the land that the Lord swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.**

According to chapter eleven in Deuteronomy our days will be long and our children’s days will be added to if we will meditate on God’s Word.” His Word is the truth it will be very difficult to exchange the truth for a lie if we have the Word of God written upon our hearts, bonded to our hands, embedded on our foreheads, speaking His oracles day and night, and finally writing them on the doorpost of our homes. The only way I know how to keep from exchanging the truth for a lie is every time you are faced with doubt ask yourself one basic question, “What does the Bible say?”





## Ripened on the Study Guide

### Lesson Twelve:

#### 1. Read Ezekiel 37:1-5 (NIV)

**The hand of the Lord was upon me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me back and forth among them, and I saw a great many of bones on the floor of the valley, bones that were very dry. He asked me, “Son of man, can these bones live?” I said, “O Sovereign Lord, you alone know.” Then he said to me, “Prophesy to these bones and say to them, “Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord! This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.**

#### 2. Fill in the blanks in Ezekiel 37:2

He led me \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ among them, and I saw a great many \_\_\_\_\_ on the floor of the valley, bones that were very \_\_\_\_\_.

Many times throughout the Bible the valley represented our trials where our battles are fought. I noticed God led Ezekiel back and forth among the dry bones among the dead situation, the hopelessness, among the reality of the valley. I noticed God made Ezekiel take notice of the situation, God made him do an assessment of the valley.

#### Multiple Choices: In Ezekiel 37: 3 which statement did God speak to Ezekiel?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ “Son of man, can you make these dry bones live?”
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ “Son of man, can your relatives make these dry bones live?”
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ “Son of man, can these bones live?”

Sometimes it seems that God ask us a rhetorical question so we will confess with our mouth His capability, which is not limited by ours. Many times in my life God has had me walk back and forth among the dry bones of my life a dead relationship, a dry bone of lack, no meat in my life,

an unfulfilled dream. In Chapter 12 on the bottom of page 132 my dad suddenly passed away due to an aneurysm in his stomach. This is one of those times God had me go back and forth contemplating the dry bones of me ever getting a chance to establish a real and authentic relationship with my earthly father. It as if I can hear God asking, “Michele can these bones live?” Can your bones live? Can I recover you from this loss? Can you trust me again? The answer appears to be obvious, “O Sovereign Lord, you alone know.”

**3. Re-read Ezekiel 37: 4-5 Then he said to me, Prophecy to these bones and say to them, “Dry bones, hear the word of the Lord!” This is what the Sovereign Lord says to these bones: I will make breath enter you, and you will come to life.**

Faith has a mouth! I noticed when Ezekiel started speaking God started moving on his behalf. A few things had to happen for the dry dead bones to get up and walk.

- a. We need to be led by the Spirit. Ezekiel 37:1
  
- b. We need to be willing to look at the dry bones of our own lives, our failures, our disappointments, our losses, our fears, and our discouragement. Ezekiel 37:2
  
- c. We need to be able to listen and answer the questions of God. “Can these bones live?” Ezekiel 37:3
  
- d. Then we need to be able to speak life into the dry bones with the Word of God. Faith has a mouth! Ezekiel 37: 4

**Read Ezekiel 37:12b-14**

**O my people, I am going to open your graves and bring up from them; I will bring you back to the land of Israel. Then you, my people, will know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and bring you up from them. I will put my Spirit in you and you will live, and will settle you in your own land. Then you will know that I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it, declares the Lord.**

4. Finally the grave of your situation will open up and your life will be brought back to the land of plenty, the land flowing with milk and honey God will put His Spirit in you and you will live again. Speak life not death into your situation. Speak the Word of God. Now the dry bones can get up and walk. I bet your thinking why would I want my hurts, disappointments, discouragements, weaknesses, and my losses to rise up and walk. Because they are apart of whom you are and where you have been. If the dry bones get up and walk then it is a sign they no longer have a resident in you. You can use your mistakes, losses, disappointments, and victories to minister in the land flowing with milk and honey. It is in these very experiences we will become more than just dry bones sitting in a valley we become flesh and blood with the breathe of God breathing in us. People seem to listen best to the people who have walked in their shoes if only through a moment. Ezekiel 37:12

5. **How many dry bones are in your valley?** \_\_\_\_\_

6. **What is dead that needs to come back to life? Your marriage, your joy, your love for the Word, your relationships with family, or friends, or is it your motivation to live among the living?**

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7. **What dry bone sticks out in your mind when you first look down into the valley of your trails? Could it be a buried dream? Could be pain of a broken relationship that needs to be restored? Could it be a pass sin that has been a secret? Could it be a present sin?**

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**What is something you can do today to help the dry bones in your life get up and walk?**

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**Word Focus:**

**Dry:** not in or under water, without moisture

**Bones:** any hard pieces that are joined together to form a skeleton.

**Prophecy:** spoken or written communication from God, often but not always a predictive nature.

**Valley:** a stretch of low land, lying between hills and mountains

**Proverb:** *Faith has a mouth*

**Faith Builder:**

Write about a *faith builder* you have had recently that caused you to speak to the dry bones.

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### **Tahitian Well:**

I found it interesting when I was looking up the definitions of the words dry means to be in or under water and the word of God is referred to as water. **John 4:13-14 “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”**

Another word I found fascinating is the word bones; any pieces that are joined together to form a skeleton. Isn't this what our past hurts and disappointments are, hard pieces, dry pieces, joined together forming a skeleton of which we once were?

One more definition caught my eye the word valley, a stretch of low land, lying between hills and mountains.

Your challenges are in between the hills and the mountains but your victories are on top of the mountain, when you can look down upon the dry bones and speak the oracles of God over your situation you are living in victory. Faith looks down and says no matter where I have been, no matter where I am at, and no matter where I am going I believe in the God who was there when I was there, who is here when I am here, and who is where I will be going before I get there.

Faith has a mouth!



## **Ripened on the Vine Study Guide:**

### **Lesson Thirteen:**

**1. Mark the following statement True or False:** Is it possible after we have been delivered, heal, and set free can we be burdened again by the same yoke? \_\_\_\_\_

**Galatians 5:1** “It is for freedom that Christ has set us free, stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by the yoke of slavery.”

**2. Read the following scripture: Ephesians 6:10-18 NIV**

**Finally, be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power. Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand the devil’s schemes. For our struggle is not with flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.**

The shield of faith acts as a protection from the fiery darts the enemy throws. I believe Satan only has five fiery darts, which are doubt, delay, defeat, discouragement, and diversion.

Whatever area you are weak in is where he will throw his flaming dart.

**According to Ephesians 6: 10-18 Name all the armor.**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to take a look at a few interesting words in Ephesians 6:10-18 one is the word “Therefore” therefore in the Greek in this particular scripture means most importantly. The Apostle Paul was essentially saying above everything else I have written in the book of Ephesians this is most important. Why? Because, if we do not put the full, not half the armor of God we will not be able to fulfill the other parts of Ephesians. The other word which is found in the King James Version of Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the *wiles* of the devil. The word wiles in Greek means, “lies in waiting” This is a very important point; the devil is waiting for you when you get up in the morning with his lies in waiting. He has been plotting, planning, and polluting the atmosphere before you even get out of bed. So, “therefore”, most importantly put on your whole armor of God. Put on your belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness feet fitted with the peace of God, helmet of salvation, the sword of the Spirit and with words of prayer passing to and fro from your lips.

In Chapter Thirteen on page 149, second paragraph I woke up and could hardly walk. My feet had already been healed in California but to my surprise I had two growths on each ankle. The Lord healed me again. The wiles of the devil had tried to come back in an area I already had victory in and tried to plant seeds of doubt and unbelief but I had already put on my full armor of God. I had already been walking in my healing and my deliverance.

**Read Exodus 14:13 Moses answered the people “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the Lord will bring you today. The Egyptians you see today you will never see again.**

The Egyptians always represented bondage. If you will stand on the word of God the word will deliver you. Stand on the promises of God get a scripture for your situation and write it on your heart and believe the bondage your in today you will not see again.

**Memorize: Isaiah 7:9 (b) if you do not stand firm in your faith, you will not stand at all.**

**Word Focus:**

**Stand:** To be or get into an upright position on ones feet.

**Shield:** A piece of armor carried on the arm to ward off blows in battle, something that guards or protects.

**Armor:** Covering worn to protect the body against weapons.

**Belt:** A strip of leather or other material worn around the waist to hold up clothing.

**Doubt:** to think that something may not be true.

**Proverb:** *Silent doubt rarely finds answers*





## **Lesson Fourteen:**

### **Read Matthew 5:23-26**

**Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that you brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother, then come and offer your gift. Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still with him on the way, or he may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and may be thrown into prison. I tell you the truth; you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.**

#### **1. Mark the following statements True or False:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Anger limits our relationship with God but not people.

\_\_\_\_\_ Anger leads to bitterness.

\_\_\_\_\_ Anger is a dangerous emotion.

\_\_\_\_\_ If we have a problem with a friend or relative we should wait a week before we try to settle the disagreement.

\_\_\_\_\_ Anger can lead to violence, emotional hurts, and mental stress.

**2. After reading Matthew 5:23-26 Do you think un- forgiveness places you in a spiritual prison and why? I am ending my book with what I think is epic, the forgiveness of one another.**

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In the day Jesus lived if you could not pay your debt you were thrown into prison until you could pay your debt in full, unless someone could pay it for you, you would more than likely die there. Un-forgiveness is a hardening of the heart it will make you bitter, tired, un-productive, sad, depressed, and eventually leave you with your own man made prison all alone, and lonely. According to scripture we need to handle forgiveness immediately. Forgiveness is different from reconciliation, forgiveness does not require any omission by the offender nor do you need to establish a relationship with offender, reconciliation reconciles the people back together through the omission of any wrong doings.

**3. Fill in the Blank 2 Corinthians 5:18**

All of this is from God, who \_\_\_\_\_ us to himself through Christ and gave us the \_\_\_\_\_ of reconciliation.

In Chapter fourteen in the last paragraph on page 178

Soon after we arrived in Missouri I realize how sick my mom was. It seemed as if she had aged on the inside about twenty years since I had seen her last. I saw the mom I had when I was a little girl. I saw the mom I had when I got married, and when I got pregnant. I saw the mom I had when I gave birth, and when I needed to talk, when I needed to cry, and when I needed a friend. My Life had been reconciled, my mother had been restored to motherhood, and my dreams of having a family had been realized and enjoyed. As I watched my mother deteriorate in front of my very eyes, the only memories I had were ones of appreciation.

Oh, how I pray you understood my journey, my challenges, my sorrow, and my determination to live my life out loud for Jesus, to walk a walk worth repeating. My story is about forgiveness, reconciliation, hope, and faith for a future generation without boundaries afflicted upon who, when, and where you choose to forgive but that you would remember your forgiveness came with a price but you have the chance to give it away for free... What can wash away my sins, nothing but the blood of Jesus, if the blood can't wash away all of someone else's sins it can't wash away mine.

I hope you noticed when my mom was dying I did not see her life flash before me I saw mine. I saw the grace and mercy that she not only contributed to my life by also those lives around me. It was in these moments I placed my mind on. We are all called to the ministry of reconciliation the question is will you answer the call?

If you will answer the call make a plan now on how you will accomplish reconciling with someone you need to forgive. If it is first through a hand written letter, then start writing, if it is through a phone call please by all means start dialing, if it is through prayer, start praying. No matter how you start the process do not put it off another day make a commitment to walk out your life in the passion of forgiveness.

**4. Write your plan down on paper each person may need a different plan.**

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**Habakkuk 2:2-3 Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that the herald may run with it. For the revelation waits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.**



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**Tahitian Well:**

Do you want to grow deeper in the understanding of forgiveness look up the scriptures then write down or discuss the importance of living a life of forgiveness? Psalm 103:3, Matthew 6:14, Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 3:13

**Interesting story:**

In the mid to late 1800's people would cook along with heat their homes with a cast iron cooking stove. At night before turning in for the evening they would need to prepare the coals. They would proceed with a process called banking the coals; this process involved heaping the coals in a pile. The coals may have seemed dead and cold on the surface but deep down inside they were still very hot. In fact when a little air, or when someone started fanning the banked coals they would flare up. Sometimes in our lives air, (a memory) is sparked someone starts fanning our banked coals and we are quickly reminded of a situation that needs once again to be forgiven, and washed with the same blood that washes me. The lesson, don't bank your coals, (un-forgiveness) in the hopes that no one will fan the flame, true forgiveness washes the coals with the word of God.

Before I end the study guide I would like to share a letter I received from a good friend of mine while she was in Paris for the Holidays

In Paris there is an Exhibit held at Elle's where Louis Bourgeois sculptures are being displayed. It is a series of sculptures and room installations, in their most non-traditional form but the through- line is always the same. Louise Bourgeois holding a mirror to herself, working through

her past, her turmoil childhood and her never ending feeling of abandonment that she felt from her mother. The message is strong, unapologetic, universal and sometimes downright bizarre.

Louise Bourgeois is now 100 years old. Though she had many exhibitions in her lifetime, she didn't get inside a museum until she was 70! Artistically, the last 30 years have been the best of her life. I do, I un-do, I re-do is one of her mottos. We create, we destroy, we re-invent. There is no such thing as giving up on your dream. If the dream is your passion, if the need for expression is larger than you, your dream is always alive it is fueled by you. By you're doing, undoing, and redoing. It may feel like your giving up, like no one is listening, others may even interpret your behavior as having given up, you may even believe that you've given up but in fact you may just be doing, un-doing, and redoing.

If we are to-do we must un-do and re-do it is what kept Louis Bourgeois a live. It was her expression that was important, even if it took 70 years to get into a museum! Written  
By: Natalia Lazarus

When I had first read the letter from my friend it immediately brought to the forefront of my thoughts how Louis Bourgeois held a mirror to her past while working through what appears to be terrible pain but as she held the mirror which reflected her life she might have been busy doing, un-doing, an re-doing the script of her existence. If I could be so bold as to interpret Louise Bourgeois art sculptures of her life's journey maybe I would interpret the art something like this, Louise Bourgeois might have been molding each section with a distinct purpose of restoration sculpting her pain into a tangible piece of reality. The un-doing may be interpreted, as she being the art not the artist might have needed something extracted so the true art exhibit may be seen. Maybe the re-doing might represent the creator himself re-doing what life's devastation had accumulated upon her own canvas. If we are to do then we must be prepared for God to un-do so He can re-do and create the finale masterpiece which He calls His creation, His children.



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