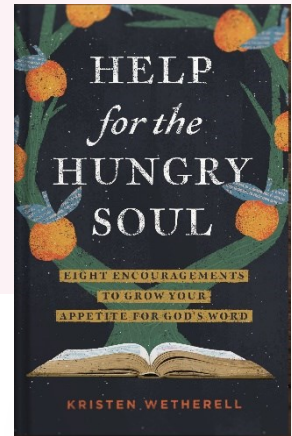




LEADER'S GUIDE

HELP FOR THE HUNGRY SOUL BY KRISTEN WETHERELL



"From the garden throughout the generations, God's word has told us the tale of the human soul: our wholehearted hunger for the creator, our terrible plunge into starvation, and our countless attempts to fix and fill ourselves with anything but true bread."

KRISTEN WETHERELL

THEMES

Bible Study

Theology

Womanhood

Scripture

Contentment

Christian Community

BOOK SUMMARY

Kristin presents a very thorough, thoughtful, and encouraging case for how the Word of God satisfies our hungry souls. So often we consume the wrong kind of "food" in our never-satisfying quest to fill the void, but Kristin reminds us that as we come to Christ's table, we will find the fulfilment we crave. Our heart's deep desire to grow in relationship with God, with others, and to see fruitfulness in our lives, is remedied as our appetite for His soul food grows and we invest our time and faith into this endeavour.

Through her easy-to-understand and relatable eight encouragements, Kristen squashes legalism, fights back against distraction, gives hope to the time-poor new mum desperate for a peaceful moment, adjusts our apathy towards the familiar book, unveils the most important feast of scripture (and it not that elusive quiet time!), as well as provides us with creative solutions to engage with the Word in new and practical ways.

Kirstin provides practical advice which is easy to implement if:

- You're weary of Bible reading.
- You've become too familiar with or apathetic towards God's Word.
- You've given up because the elusive quiet time seems impossible.
- You don't see the significance of feasting on the Word in community.
- You want to fall in love afresh with your Bible.
- You need something hope-filled and encouraging to read.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & TALKING POINTS

1

Q. "How would you describe your current appetite for God's Word?" (p11).

TALKING POINTS

What kind of "hungry" are we? Kristin says we hunger for the word through a deep and ever-increasing desire for scripture or through a languishing or longing of the soul. She defines three types of hunger:

- *Starving Hunger*; This is the human beings' natural condition as we seek to fill ourselves outside of Christ. This is the starving hunger of a never-satisfied heart (p12).
- *Seeking Hunger*; When we have little desire for God and His Word or when God feels distant (p13).
- *Satisfied Hunger*; The holy hunger of the satisfied heart (p14).

2

Q. In Chapter One, Kristen lists *Five Common Hindrances of Bible Reading*. Which one did you most relate to? Why?

TALKING POINTS

Five Common Hindrances pages 15-19;

- *Distraction*; We're unable to focus because of the unrelenting simulations we face daily.
- *Dullness*; We have become overfamiliar with our Bibles and do not appreciate the privilege it is to have such easy access to God's Word (p17).
- *Deceit*; We have begun to believe lies about God and His Word, we've become legalistic or view God's Word as rules and restrictions (p17).
- *Discouragement*; Seasons of spiritual dryness, suffering, grief or hardship (p18).
- *Desires*; We don't always want what's good for us (p18).

3

Q. In Chapter Two, Kristen reminds us that we must plead for a *Holy Hunger* and says, "We need to be needy" (p27). Do you struggle to admit your soul's hunger and deep need for God?

TALKING POINTS

"Only God can produce a hunger within us for his words, but we can put ourselves in the blessed position to receive from him" (p28):

- Only God can provide food that truly sustains us.
- Without the Spirit, we are helpless to want what we ought to want and love what we ought to love (p28).
- "Day by day we need him [God] to alter our appetite" (p29).
- We can get into the habit of simply reading words when we open our Bibles, instead of primarily seeking someone to love or acknowledging our desperate need for God and his words.

4

Q. In Chapter Three, *Don't Miss Jesus*, Kristen asks us, "What is the whole point of reading the Bible?" (p41). What answer would you have given before reading this book? Has it changed now? Do you sometimes struggle with the temptations of *Foolishness* or *Slowness of Heart*?

TALKING POINTS

Some of our answers might include: to learn, obey, grow or to know God. Kristin describes two temptations we face when opening our Bibles and encountering Jesus;

- *Foolishness (and Wisdom)*; “The fool forsakes God’s counsel and teaching... turns to his own devices, and loves worldly gain, to his demise. He lacks judgement and good sense” (p43).
- *Slowness of Heart (and Hunger)*; Unbelief – not trusting or believing what Jesus said (p44).

5

Q. Have you at times, forgotten how precious the Word of God is? How did Chapter Four help you to remember the privilege we have today?

TALKING POINTS

Kristen briefly discusses the access people have had throughout history to the written Bible:

- Today we have access to audio Bibles, and Bibles in many translations in various forms (hardback, paperback, apps, online and free, and in many different languages).
- Before Gutenberg’s printing press, Bibles were incredibly rare, often written in languages common folk could not understand, and God’s words were shared verbally in the community.

6

Q. In Chapter Five, *Feast with Your Church*, Kristen asks us, “Have you considered that your main spiritual meal is to be enjoyed *at church*?” (p72). Did this chapter change your perspective on how the Bible nourishes your soul?

TALKING POINTS

The Bible nourishes us in community through:

- Singing God’s Word (p74)
- Praying God’s Word (p75)
- Reading God’s Word (p76)
- Hearing God’s Word Preached (p77)

7

Q. Did you find Kristen’s ideas about “Quiet Time” freeing? How might you have been limiting yourself or your time with God? What new and creative ways have you been using to engage with God’s Word?

TALKING POINTS

“Feed Yourself Creatively” (p93-97)

- By yourself; Bible reading plans, Bible journalling, meditation, scripture printed and hung around the house, audio Bible, worship music, open Bible in kitchen, scripture wallpapers, scripture apparel or jewellery.
- With family; reading the Bible during meals, devotionals, memory verses, and scripture music.
- With friends; Bible-centred small groups, reading one one-on-one with a friend, listening to sermons or podcasts and discussing, and texting scripture to each other.

8

Q. "When we engage with God's word, more is happening than what you can see" (p102). How can we trust God's nourishing work?

TALKING POINTS

We can trust God's nourishing work because (p109-112):

- God's Word is Alive (Hebrews 4:12)
- God's Word Gives Wisdom (2 Timothy 3:15)
- God's Word Equips Us for Good Works (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
- God's Word Is Purposeful (Isaiah 55:10-11)
- God's Word Makes us Holy (John 17:17)
- God's Word Brings Blessing (Proverbs 2:20)
- God's Word Cannot Fail (Joshua 21:45)
- God's Word is a Safe Place (2 Samuel 22:31)
- God's Word Brings Comfort (Psalm 119:50)
- God's Word Gives Peace (Psalm 119:65)
- God's Word Instructs and Leads (Psalm 25:8-9)
- God's Word Gives Understanding (Psalm 119:130)
- God's Word Kills Sin and Defeats Evil (Psalm 81:13-14)
- God's Word Brings Confidence (Psalm 16:7-8)
- God's Word Gives Joy (Psalm 19:8)
- God's Word Creates and Sustains (Hebrews 1:3)
- God's Word Proectds (Psalm 37:23-24)
- God's Word Brings Life (Proverbs 4:13)

9

Q. Did any of the stories at the end of the chapters resonate with you? If so, why?

TALKING POINTS

Testimonies:

- Lydia; A Growing Affection for God's word (p22-23).
- Josh; Hungry to be Hungry Again (p36-37).
- Aubrey; A Treasure of the Lord's Compassion (p51-52).
- Davis; Reviving the Soul, Rejoicing the Heart (p65-66).
- Amanda; The Long, Good Work of God's Word (p79-80).
- Bill; Many Ways to Grow in God's Word (p97-98).
- Linda; God's Power, Our Persistence (p113-114).

10

Q. Have the eight encouragements in this book enticed you to feast on true food? How are you going to continue to pursue a Bible-nourished soul?

TALKING POINTS

Possible changes we might make:

- Getting up 15 minutes earlier every day to prioritise Bible reading.
- Listening to the audio Bible while driving.
- Take the Bible to work to read on the train or during your lunch break.
- Creating Bible quiet time with your family and children to create the habit.
- Being intentional with time, sacrificing or reducing television and social media to prioritise what is profoundly important.
- Praying for passion and renewed interest to read your Bible as well as a sincere desire to study God's Word.
- Remind ourselves that seeking the Lord requires more than emotional commitment and experiences but continued learning and renewal of our minds in the Word.
- Find an accountability partner to check in with or find a friend to study with.
- Feast with our community and prioritise church attendance.



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