



THE
*Well-
Watered
Life*

DEVOTIONAL
JOURNAL



GRETCHEN
SAFFLES

THE WELL-WATERED LIFE



THE

*Well-
Watered
Life*



GRETCHEN
SAFFLES

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The Well-Watered Life

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An Invitation to the
**WELL-WATERED
LIFE**

Hey, friend.

There's a reason you picked up this journal. You might be thumbing through the pages, wondering what this book really has to offer. You might feel discouraged in your walk with Jesus, not knowing how to get from a life that feels weary and dried up to a life that's abundant and well watered. You might have a deep craving in your soul for more than what this world has for you, but you don't know where to go from here. If you're nodding your head, you're in good company, because I've been there too.

At the age of seven, I gave my life to Jesus, but it wasn't until much later that I came to grasp the full

implications of the gospel. I'd attend church on Sunday then go about my life on Monday, not understanding how the words of Scripture applied to my everyday struggles. I strove after perfection and "good girl" status, not realizing that it was all in vain apart from Jesus. I ran hard after what the world offers—success, popularity, beauty, possessions, relationships—and ended up winded and empty handed.

I've found myself at the bottom of plenty of empty wells, and from that vantage point, I've been able to see that the things of this world are fleeting but God's faithfulness is forever. Every time I've found myself there, I've discovered the grace of Jesus to be all the sweeter and the Good News of the gospel all the more powerful. Since that day I surrendered my life to Christ, I've questioned my identity, trudged through an eating disorder, seen loved ones suffer, and battled anxiety, depression, and panic attacks. I've been like a dried-up well.

But Jesus has never let me stay there, because when I gave my life to him, he gave me a new identity as a Well-Watered Woman. He exchanged my brokenness for his wholeness, my wandering for his mission, my striving for his peace. He has shown me a new path to walk on—one where he is forever by my side, guiding my steps. The dried-up moments of my life don't define me because I've been redefined by Christ. Do I still struggle at times? Yes. Do I stay there? No. I *am*

well watered and *becoming* well watered. And if you've given your life to Jesus, the same is true for you.

We are on this journey of knowing Jesus together. He came to offer us new life, hope, and freedom, and this isn't just for tomorrow; it's for right now, today. The purpose of this journal is to encourage you in your own journey of living the well-watered life. I pray that throughout these pages, God would do a work in your heart to root you in the Word, grow you in grace, and cause your life to flourish for his glory!

By the time you finish filling out these pages, you'll be different than you were when you started because that's what following Jesus does—it changes you from the inside out. May you seek him with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength as you live the well-watered life made possible through the Cross.

HOW TO USE THE WELL-WATERED LIFE JOURNAL

The goal of this journal is for you to use it as a companion on your journey of following Jesus. Think of it as an encouraging friend who reminds you to follow Christ. As you walk through the pages of this journal, you will be encouraged to make changes in your inner life—changes that will manifest in your outward actions.

In my book *The Well-Watered Woman*, I share more in depth about what the well-watered life looks like

and how following Jesus transforms us from the inside out. This journal can be used with the book to help you put into practice what you learn through your reading. I've indicated the specific chapters that go with the theme of each part of the journal so you can reread the chapter or dig deeper.

This journal is also designed to be something you use over a long period of time. The well-watered life doesn't happen overnight. Likewise, you won't finish this journal overnight. It's meant to be an encouragement as you keep pursuing Christ in the daily grind. Learning to implement spiritual disciplines is like planting a small seed. It takes time for the seed to grow, become deeply rooted, and produce fruit. Following Jesus is a lifetime journey, not something to mark off a checklist.

You may find yourself wanting to sprint through this journal. My encouragement to you is to think of this journey as a marathon, with Jesus as the ultimate prize. Not only is he the prize, but he is also with you every step of the way.

Through the six different parts of this journal, you will experience ways to live out spiritual disciplines in your everyday life. *The Well-Watered Life* journal is designed to prompt you to pursue Christ in the rhythms of your days so you can know him more.

You'll find specific ways to practice the spiritual disciplines near the end of each part. You can stick with

one spiritual discipline for a period of time to create a daily habit and rhythm, or once you've read through the introductions to each part, you can alternate the parts you use each week. The purpose is to give you some soil to plant the seeds of spiritual disciplines into your soul so you can grow and produce fruit.

Donald S. Whitney, the author of *Spiritual Disciplines for the Christian Life*, defines spiritual disciplines as “those practices found in Scripture that promote spiritual growth among believers in the gospel of Jesus Christ. They are habits of devotion, habits of experiential Christianity that have been practiced by God’s people since biblical times.” Spiritual disciplines are practical rhythms designed by God to conform our hearts, minds, attitudes, and actions to the ways of Christ. They are the fruit of a soul that loves God and desires to live according to his Word. Spiritual disciplines lead us to the well-watered life that is deeply rooted in the gospel. They are not a form of legalism; they are the way we love Jesus and live like him—and the way we find freedom.

In his book *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*, Richard J. Foster divides spiritual disciplines into three categories: inward, outward, and corporate disciplines. The inward disciplines are meditation, prayer, fasting, and Bible study. The outward disciplines are simplicity, solitude, submission, and service. The corporate disciplines are confession,

worship, guidance, and celebration. This journal will touch on several aspects of these spiritual disciplines.

Take a moment to flip through the journal and get acquainted with the different parts and prompts. This journal doesn't have to be used in a linear fashion. You can jump around to different parts as you learn to practice spiritual disciplines and pursue a life that's constantly growing in Christ.

Here's a glimpse of what you'll find in each part.

Part 1: Well Watered

I am well watered because Jesus, the living water, satisfies my soul's thirst forever.

Living "well watered" begins and ends with knowing Jesus. When you accept his not-so-formal invitation to follow in his footsteps, you will embrace your purpose and mission in life. This section provides the foundation for who the Well-Watered Woman is and what it means to walk in the new life Jesus came to give. You'll dig deep into the soil of the Word to discover who Jesus is and who he calls you to be. The well-watered life is fueled by faithfulness to Jesus, and this manifests itself in our actions and obedience.

Part 2: Planted

I am planted in the Word by the Gardener of my soul.

Knowing who God made you to be and embracing your story for his glory are key to the well-watered

life. In this part, you'll dig into your roots and discover what you were made to do, as well as establish a mission statement to guide your days. When you feel like your identity is crumbling or you forget the mysterious ways God has worked in your life in the past, open to this part to remember that you've been planted by the Gardener and that your life has purpose.

Part 3: Rooted

I am rooted in the unshakable gospel of Jesus Christ.

Your life has roots. Buried in your soul are the thoughts and beliefs that guide and direct your days. In this part, you'll expose the rotten roots and ground your mind in truth by practicing the disciplines of memorizing Scripture, replacing lies with truth, and meditating on the Word of God. Use this part to record verses you're memorizing and lies you're working to weed out.

Part 4: Growing

I am growing in grace every day as I seek to know Jesus more.

In order to grow, you must learn to accept God's gift of grace through the pruning of your soul. God prunes us as we read and study his Word and as the Holy Spirit works in the soil of our souls. Growth also comes as we abide in Christ, read books that deepen our faith in him, and think true thoughts. This part is designed to encourage you to keep pursuing growth and tracking that growth over the years.

Part 5: Blooming

I will bloom in God's timing and for his glory.

In order to bloom, you have to know the season you are living in. Just as the seasons in nature change, so do the seasons of your life. Blooming comes when we humbly serve as Jesus did—right where we are—and as we cultivate hearts of gratitude. This part is designed to urge you toward a life of sacrificial love and praise to God. Use this part daily or weekly to practice the discipline of gratitude and to record creative ways to serve those around you.

Part 6: Flourishing

I will flourish as I abide in Christ in all seasons.

A life that produces lasting fruit is one that is faithful to the gospel. As you have grown in your faith and knowledge of the Word, the natural outflow is to share the Good News with others. In this part, you'll practice the disciplines of prayer, giving, sharing your faith, and remembering God's faithfulness. This part is meant to be used on an ongoing basis. Remember, good fruit takes time to grow. Keep praying, keep sharing, and keep remaining faithful to God's mission—and trust him with the ultimate harvest.

Growing alongside you,

*Gretchen
Saffler*



GOD EXCHANGES
OUR BROKENNESS
FOR HIS WHOLENESS,
OUR WANDERING
FOR HIS MISSION,
OUR STRIVING
FOR HIS PEACE.





PART I

WELL WATERED

You can work through this part of the journal in conjunction with chapters 3, 6, and 12 of The Well-Watered Woman.



*I am well watered because
Jesus, the living water, satisfies
my soul's thirst forever.*



Well watered:

- 1) The condition of the follower of Jesus who
has received the living water Jesus gives*
- 2) The state of being filled with God's grace
and overflowing with joy, peace, and hope*



Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

JOHN 4:13-14





IF I HAD TO CHOOSE one season to live in, it would be spring, without a doubt. There's something glorious about trees budding, dormant branches blooming, and the ground beginning to produce a harvest. It's as if the world is waking up from a deep slumber, and it beckons my soul to wake up as well.

But as you already know, no one can live in a season of perpetual spring. In order to thrive and survive, plants need every season—spring, summer, autumn, and winter. Each season has a purpose in the grander scheme, and without the other seasons, we wouldn't be able to delight in the growth that comes in springtime.

The same is true for our spiritual lives. If we want to grow and flourish in our walk with Christ, we have to walk through seasons of heat, rain, loss, and dormancy.

Spring calls us to wake up, but *winter* reminds us to slow down.

Summer calls us to work hard, but *autumn* reminds us to enjoy the harvest.

There is a reason for every season, and because of God's sovereignty and grace, our souls can be "like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither" (Psalm 1:3). The flourishing life is the life God created us for, and it has been made possible through Christ. It begins with the life-changing decision to follow him.



JESUS' SIMPLE INVITATION

The Gospels record the disciples' responses to Jesus' invitation to follow him with keen attention to detail. The first disciples Jesus called were Simon (better known as Peter) and his brother Andrew (see Matthew 4:18). While they were casting their net into the Sea of Galilee, Jesus approached them with a simple yet life-altering invitation: "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men" (verse 19).

The response of the brothers is mind blowing. Scripture says, "*Immediately*, they left their nets and followed him" (Matthew 4:20, emphasis added). With zero hesitation, the two brothers responded to Jesus' call, leaving behind everything they held dear to follow the one who is worth everything.



As Peter and Andrew were walking with the long-awaited Messiah, they came upon James and his brother John. While they were midstitch in mending their fishing nets, Jesus offered these two other brothers the same invitation. The stakes were even higher here: “Immediately they left the boat *and their father* and followed him” (Matthew 4:22, emphasis added).

Jesus’ not-so-formal invitation to these four men was so compelling that they immediately left everything—their livelihood, their fishing nets, their father, and their comfort—all for the sake of following him. Two words in a simple invitation changed everything for them *forever*: “Follow me.”

This journal is your own not-so-formal invitation to embrace the well-watered life—the life Jesus came to give, the life that is only possible through the Cross—in every season.

The call of Christ is simple yet transformative. Following Jesus isn’t merely a “yes” response with your lips; it’s a “yes, you can have every part of me” response with your entire life. When you surrender everything to Christ, your life will be flipped inside out and put right-side up.

Jesus changes *everything*.

That’s what these pages are all about—helping you chronicle your journey of finding Jesus and faithfully following him. When the Israelites were in exile in



Babylon, the Lord gave them this message: “You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart” (Jeremiah 29:13). You’re about to embark on a journey of seeking Jesus wholeheartedly right where you are, and it will change everything about how you live your days.

Throughout *The Well-Watered Life* journal, you’ll learn practical ways to implement spiritual disciplines and rhythms in your daily routine as you pursue a well-watered life in Christ. This journal isn’t about doing more; it’s about *being with* Jesus and *becoming like* Jesus. He’s the goal, the prize, and the purpose of our seeking.

To put it simply, the goal of this journal can be summed up in this prayer of John the Baptist: “He must increase, but I must decrease” (John 3:30).

More Jesus, less me. This is the path to glory.

Jesus is calling, “Follow me.” May we leave everything behind to follow and find him who is everything.

DIG DEEPER

What does the disciples’ immediate response of following Jesus show you about what it means to be obedient to Christ?



THE GRACE WELL
NEVER RUNS DRY,
AND IT DOESN'T
COME WITH
STIPULATIONS.





LIFE: WELL WATERED

John 4 records Jesus giving another not-so-formal invitation to the well-watered life—this time to a broken woman with a stained record. The location? A well in Samaria.

This wasn't a normal meeting, and according to the culture of the time, it was completely unexpected. In John 4:3-4, we learn that after Jesus left Judea for Galilee, "he had to pass through Samaria." The phrase "had to" implies that there was a greater reason than mere geography that Jesus passed through Samaria. In that era, Jews didn't associate with Samaritans and tended to avoid them at all costs. Jesus, on the other hand, walked into Samaria with purpose. While he was there, he met a woman at a well in the middle of the day. This was no accidental meeting; it was divine intervention.

Jesus, weary from his travels, approached a place known as Jacob's well and sat beside it. At that time, "a woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, 'Give me a drink'" (John 4:7).

Jesus asked the woman for a drink from the well, knowing he was about to offer her a drink from the Well of eternal life. He used a mundane moment to show her he was the true Messiah, the Redeemer, the Giver of abundant life. He takes broken people and makes them new; he takes stained pasts and wipes



them clean; he takes shattered identities and reshapes them to be like him. This is what he offered the woman at the well. It was the offer of a lifetime: to trade a dried-up life for the well-watered life.

As the story unfolds, the woman, shocked that Jesus would talk to her, questioned him. Jesus responded, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, ‘Give me a drink,’ you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water” (John 4:10).

Jesus offered this unnamed woman a drink from the Well that will never run dry and always satisfies—the Well of himself. When he made the offer, he knew every detail of her past. He knew the sin she was living in (see John 4:16-19). He knew full well who he was talking to. And yet Jesus revealed himself to her right there at a well in Samaria.

Read John 4:15-29. What was the woman’s response to Jesus’ invitation?

She accepted the invitation. She left her dried-up ways to follow Jesus and embrace the well-watered life made possible through him.



John 4:28-29 says, “The woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ‘Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?’” *She left everything for him who offered her everything.*

This woman’s testimony of being brought back from death to life, transformed from dried up to well watered, spread among her people. As a result of her boldness, they heard the words of Jesus and drank deeply from the Well that never runs dry and always satisfies: “Many Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman’s testimony, ‘He told me all that I ever did.’ So when the Samaritans came to him, they asked him to stay with them, and he stayed there two days. And many more believed because of his word” (John 4:39-41).

The story of the woman at the well shows us that there’s no barrier Jesus can’t break, no stronghold he can’t shake, no ground he won’t walk, no people he won’t talk to. Romans 5:8 says, “God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” The key word here that should take our breath always is *while*. Christ didn’t die for us once we had our act together; he died *while* we were still helpless, reckless, and rebellious. He came to offer us a drink from the Well that never runs dry and always satisfies: *himself*.



DIG DEEPER

Is there anything holding you back from accepting Jesus' invitation to the well-watered life?

Begin your journey by surrendering your broken past, your present problems, and your future worries to Jesus, the Well of living water.

THE WELL-WATERED WOMAN: WHO IS SHE?

The story of the woman at the well shows us that *anyone* can leave the dried-up life to embrace the well-watered life in Christ. He uses unlikely people to bring glory and honor to his name. The fact that I'm writing this journal is proof that God can use anyone and any story to accomplish his purposes.

When I was in the depths of an eating disorder, I was as dried up as a person can be. My soul and body ached for peace, for the happiness the world promised



if I were a certain size. When my eyes were opened to how this stronghold was keeping me hostage, I felt utterly broken and ashamed. I was sure my testimony would be tainted forever.

What I didn't realize was that God was going to use my brokenness to bring me to a deeper understanding of his holiness and the wholeness I have in him. I didn't realize how God would use my testimony to help rescue other women and girls in similar struggles as I showed them the hope of Christ.

But now, as I look back, I can see how God was at work, redeeming and renewing my soul. My testimony isn't ruined by my past or by my present struggles; it's made stronger as I draw near to Christ, whose grace is sufficient for my weakness (see 2 Corinthians 12:9). Jesus is not limited; he is full of grace and truth, and he offers a fresh start to even the worst of sinners (see John 1:14; 1 Timothy 1:15).

This brings me to the Well-Watered Woman. Who is she, really? Is she a perfect woman who is always happy and never struggles? Is she a woman with a spotless record?

The answer is no because such a woman doesn't exist (see Romans 3:10). Romans 3:23 tells us that *all* people have sinned and fall short of God's glory. Apart from God working on our behalf, there is no one righteous, not one. The Well-Watered Woman is a woman



who has been delivered from darkness by Christ (see Colossians 1:13-14). She is a citizen of heaven and no longer lives for the desires of this world but for the eternal, secure treasure of knowing Christ. She doesn't build a temporary kingdom on earth but is a part of the Kingdom of God.

The story of the woman at the well and the stories throughout Scripture show us that the Well-Watered Woman isn't the perfect woman; she's a woman who comes to know Jesus, who is perfect. She is you, and she is me.

Because of the Cross, her stained record is wiped clean by the spotless blood of Jesus.

Because of the Cross, her broken state is redeemed.

Because of the Cross, her future is made secure.

Because Jesus is risen, she is forgiven. Because she is forgiven, she is commissioned to love him with her heart, soul, mind, and strength (see Matthew 22:37). Because she is commissioned, she lives her days on purpose, embracing the gift of the gospel and sharing it with others.

If you've given your life to Christ, you are now well watered. It's not about what you've done; it's about all that Jesus has already done. When Jesus proclaimed, "It is finished" on the cross, he didn't leave anything undone (John 19:30). He paid it all. He died the death we deserved so we could have eternal life with him.



GOD HASN'T
CALLED US TO
TOMORROW;
HE HAS
ENTRUSTED US
WITH TODAY.





Jesus doesn't leave you where you are; he leads you to new life.

DIG DEEPER

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17, and write out the passage below.

Made new! This is who you are in Christ. Though your flesh might tell you otherwise, you have been set free by the blood of Jesus and given a fresh start. You have all you need in him to live the full, conquering, well-watered life. This doesn't mean your life will be easy or you'll never stumble. It means you'll endure and you won't have to stay in defeat or discouragement because God uses all things to reveal his love and to make you more like Jesus.

From dried up to well watered—this is who you are in Jesus.

YOU ARE ALREADY BUT NOT YET

As we know all too well, change doesn't happen overnight. When I was in the muck and mire of an eating disorder, I wasn't healed of my struggle the day I realized how deep I'd sunk. It took time and work for God to heal



both my mind and my body. He continued to remind me who I already was in Christ and who I was becoming through Christ. The process of continual change in the Christian life is called sanctification—a transformation that is both once and for all and day by day.

Look up the definition for *sanctification* in the dictionary and write it in your own words in the space provided:

When you give your life to Christ, you are made new and sanctified by the blood of Jesus. But you are also in process, being made new and being sanctified. This is the mystery of the “already but not yet” nature of being a Jesus-follower. You are already holy because Jesus covers you with his righteousness, but you are also being made holy as you come to the Word daily and are changed into his likeness through the work of the Holy Spirit.

Throughout this journal, you’ll walk through five different aspects of Christian growth and sanctification: planted, rooted, growing, blooming, and flourishing. This is not a journey of getting your act together or becoming perfect; it’s a journey of knowing him who



is perfect and pursuing holiness out of an overflow of his grace. The purpose of these pages is to offer you encouragement and insight as you discover how following Jesus impacts your thinking, believing, doing, and becoming.

DIG DEEPER

In the chart below, I've provided Scripture references to help you write a description of the well-watered life compared to the dried-up life. As you write the characteristics of each, take inventory of your own life. Are you living more like the dried-up life or the well-watered life? As you fill out this chart, you'll see the stark contrast of a life ruled by the sinful nature and a life ruled by Christ. It will quickly become clear that the life lived for Christ is the well-watered, abundant, and free life we long for. Take time to read through these passages and praise Jesus for offering you the Well of living water, himself.

THE DRIED-UP WOMAN		THE WELL-WATERED WOMAN	
	Psalm 1:4-5		Psalm 1:1-3
	Proverbs 7:11		Psalm 115:1
	Proverbs 14:1		Proverbs 14:1
	Proverbs 15:18		Proverbs 22:1
	Proverbs 21:9		Proverbs 31:10-31
	Proverbs 25:24		Matthew 6:33-34



THE DRIED-UP WOMAN		THE WELL-WATERED WOMAN	
	Isaiah 30:15		Matthew 7:24-25
	Matthew 6:5		1 Corinthians 10:31
	Matthew 7:26-27		Galatians 5:1
	Romans 8:6		Ephesians 5:1-2
	Galatians 5:19-21		Philippians 3:12-20
	Ephesians 2:1-3		Titus 2:3-5
	Ephesians 5:3-5		1 Peter 3:3-4

Write a prayer as you embark on your journey, praising Jesus for taking your place and offering you grace, and then asking for the Holy Spirit to cultivate a well-watered life in you.

SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES:

THE KEY TO FRUITFULNESS

Discipline often gets a bad rap. Depending on your personality, this word might even make you cringe. For me, discipline used to sound like a punishment, or at the very least, it implied doing something I didn't want



WE BECOME
GOD'S CHILDREN
NOT BECAUSE OF
OUR MERIT
BUT BECAUSE OF
HIS MERCY.





to do. However, as I began studying spiritual disciplines in the early (and very exhausting) months of motherhood, I learned that spiritual disciplines are actually for our good. They provide for our souls' deep needs in ways this world can't satisfy. Just as vegetables have essential vitamins and nutrients to help our bodies and brains thrive, spiritual disciplines help us flourish spiritually. They're how we commune with Christ in daily life. They're the key to a faithful and fruitful life in Christ! Rather than being something I "have" to do, the disciplines have become something I *get* to do to know God more in my everyday life.

Let's break down some barriers that might be keeping you from a life of spiritual discipline.

Write a definition for discipline, in your own words:

In *Discipline: The Glad Surrender*, Elisabeth Elliot explains, "Discipline is the wholehearted yes to the call of God. When I know myself called, summoned, addressed, taken possession of, known, acted upon, I have heard the Master. I put myself gladly, fully, and forever at His disposal, and to whatever He says my answer



is yes.”¹ Discipline is ultimately saying yes to Jesus—to his ways, his life, and his teaching. It’s renouncing our old patterns in order to put on a Christ-centered life. Discipline requires intention and effort, but the payoff is worth it.

In Ephesians 4:17-32 the apostle Paul compares the new life we have in Christ to the old life we once lived. Read this passage, and then write down the contrasting characteristics of the old life and the new life.

THE OLD LIFE	THE NEW LIFE

In the life of the Christian, discipline ultimately means seeking to follow the footsteps of Jesus. Jesus always goes first. He’s our example, our model, our leader.



Read the following verses, and write down what they teach us about being conformed to Christ.

John 8:31-32



John 13:15



Romans 8:29



Romans 12:1-2



2 Corinthians 3:18



Ephesians 5:1-2



Philippians 2:3-8





Philippians 3:7-14

Colossians 3:1-14

1 Peter 1:13-16

Being conformed to Christ is a daily transformative work in our hearts. As we seek Jesus, the Holy Spirit changes us from the inside out. Jesus set the example of holy living through his own life. This pattern begins with total surrender to our heavenly Father and complete obedience to his will in all things (see John 6:38).

Throughout the Gospels, we see how Jesus displayed the spiritual disciplines. He modeled for us what it looks like to live a life of simple, wholehearted worship and obedience—praying at all times, giving selflessly, serving faithfully, knowing the Word, preaching the gospel, and seeking the Kingdom of God. We come to know Jesus more as we work out our faith in everyday life.

