

Ancient
Passages:
How it
Works?

Story Number Four

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Ancient Passages – How it Works – Story Number Three

The richness of the timeless, ancient stories, the way they dig into you as you dig into them, will amaze you and challenge you to be more, so you can do more. This happens whether you are reading alone, with another person, or in community with others who are also seeking wisdom.

The process is simple. The tools are practical. The approach is proven. The passages are powerful.

You will be equipped and empowered to engage others in the dynamic impact of Discovery Studies.

Proven in millions of lives worldwide, the passages in this simple process with its practical tools change perspectives and lives. The topical books in the Ancient Passages series are bringing the Discovery Study Approach to individuals and groups who would otherwise never have known the wisdom and peace to be found in these studies.

Designed to invite individual discovery, and generate multiplication in groups this unique approach is not

just happening in Africa, but can happen for you and those you care about.

A Story of How it Works:

Elisha was meeting in a small group focused on studies from the book Passages: Marriage Wisdom. She had been introduced to the idea and invited by her close friend Clarice who knew that Elisha was hanging on in her marriage, often verbally put down, and not feeling appreciated even when she did everything right. They had talked before over coffee at Starbucks and Clarice had shared a deep pain she was going through. Even in her own hurt Elisha had been trying to help Esperanza with her marriage and with a confusing and controlling relationship with her husband's mother. Elisha invited Esperanza.

The three of them met at a small table in a Starbucks. They glanced through the six topics in the book: "Getting Along at Home," "Serving One Another," "Communication Conflict," "Intimacy," "Spiritually Single," and "Miscarriage,". Each topic had six subtopics. Elisha knew that Clarice had a miscarriage six weeks before and wondered how that topic would work for her.

Clarice began. "I went through a workshop introducing this process and we did practice sessions so I am somewhat familiar with how it works. I think we can each benefit from this study and from sharing in it together. There is a section in the front of your book, 'The "Discovery" Approach.' The essential guidelines are there and although it is just the basics we picked them up pretty quickly in the workshop. Basically we each answer the same questions each time and make a statement about how we will apply what we have discovered.

Clarice turned to the subtopic, 'in good times and bad,' and asked the first question, "What happened last week for which you are thankful?" and after each one had answered she followed with the second question, "What challenge are you facing in your life, family, or community?"

Clarice read the passage and asked Elisha to retell it in her own words and told her that it was not a test so she and Esperanza would help to fill in any details they remembered.

Clarice then asked, "What did you discover about God in this passage? Esperanza started her response by saying, "I read a book that said..."

Clarice immediately interrupted her and said, “If I let you finish I will likely have to ask you where in this passage is that found. In the workshop and in the “Discovery” Approach section in your book it is stated like this, “Where is that found in this passage?” It is important that we stay focused only on the passage itself when we are answering the questions. Anyone in a group can ask that question when it is needed as a reminder to help keep us all on track.

Esperanza rephrased her answer and began with, “What I discovered about God in this passage is...”

They answered the next question, “What did you discover about people (humanity)?and then came to the question, “How will you apply what you have discovered? (Start your answer with ‘I will’).” Clarice encouraged them to be specific and decide something simple and actionable, something they could do in the next week and report back to the group how they did. After they came up with their “I will” statements there were two questions left to answer. The first, or actually the seventh question was, “Will you tell the story of this passage to someone this week?” They all said yes, but Clarice named another friend and both Elisha and Esperanza said they would have to think about it.

Then came the last question, “What can we do to help with, or solve a challenge from our responses to question number two. Esperanza said, “Clarice, you said you were still recovering from a medical procedure that made some basic activities, like housework, a challenge and that you needed to get stronger. I used to clean houses professionally. I owned my own business, and I’m good at it. How about I come over and take care of that? “Elisha chimed in, “How about we both come over. I can help.”

As they finished with that last of the eight questions two women came from their table and the tall one with her British accent said, “Please excuse me, don’t mean to intrude, but we were observing the three of you and I need to tell you that we are not religious, and maybe you are, but if you are going to do another of whatever you just did, we’d like to join you.” Clarice answered, “Normally we would meet again in a week, but if you guys can stay I can. Elisha and Esperanza both nodded yes and Esperanza said, “I would like to call a friend and see if she can join us. She lives about five minutes away.”

After bathroom breaks and a couple of additional

drink orders the six members of this new group sat around a larger table and began the next subtopic, "love, honor, and cherish." A very good news in the process was something the new members would soon discover. No-one in the group would ever try to tell someone else in the group what to think, what to do, or what to believe. Each group member would be free to discover for his or her self and from the collective responses of the other group members.

The newly formed group continued to meet and after three more sessions the tall British-accented woman, whose name was Adwena, said, "I would like to invite a friend to join our group" to which Clarice responded, "We could add one more, but I suggest you start with her and then ask her to invite some others from her circle of influence. You will need to meet with them two or three times to get them started, but then you should no longer attend their meetings and just check in with your friend to see how they are progressing. That way we have multiplied and they can also multiply by starting other groups."

Adwena replied, "I can jolly well do that." She smiled and continued, "I just threw in the 'jolly well' because by now I am quite sure you would expect it."