**The Culture of “Women in the Word”**

We come together for the purpose of studying the Word of God and growing in Christ together. We have been intentional about creating a culture in Women in the Word where women feel safe, valued, respected, loved and encouraged. Thank you for reading and observing these guidelines.

**Women are loved and respected.** Therefore, we avoid cliques, welcome any new ladies who come to our groups, and treat each other with honor, respect and courtesy.

**Relationships are very important**. Since we come from a broad range of backgrounds, and are at various stages of spiritual development, we make room for new opinions and points of view, and don’t criticize other people’s opinions or their churches. We do not give advice unless it is asked for.

**Each woman is encouraged to share, and her input is considered valuable.** Please monitor yourself, as to how much or how little you are sharing, and make sure you do not monopolize the conversation in your small group, but do contribute something to the discussion. The vitality of the group depends on each member participating and contributing her thoughts and insights.

**The study of God’s Word is taken seriously**. We do our homework and come prepared. In case you did not get your homework done, come anyway and enjoy learning from others, but please don’t “wing it”. Just answer questions for which you prepared in advance. Please try to stay on target in your discussion of the homework.

**Healthy boundaries are maintained**. Please come on time, keep confidences, and do not gossip or criticize others. Please help with responsibilities that may arise, such as putting away tables and chairs at the end of the evening or bringing food when it’s your turn. [Each small group decides on their own food plan.] Please make attending Women in the Word and your small group’s social gatherings a priority. Please call or text your small group shepherd to let her know if you will be late or absent.

Jesus is glorified when love, appreciation, praise and encouragement are generously expressed. Thank you for praying for the other ladies in your small group, and expressing your love and encouragement to them.