



# #unfiltered

## Bible Study Series for Women's Ministry

**Hello beloved  
sisters and  
friends!**



Sometimes when we refer to someone who has no filter, we are talking about someone who says everything that comes to their mind, without thinking. But that isn't the case with this Bible Study Series **#unfiltered**.

This series is for women just as they are, so that they know that God loves them and has great blessings for each one of them ... That is why I've titled it **#unfiltered**.

Lately, people take a lot of pictures and use all kinds of filters. My granddaughters were teaching me how to use Snapchat and how to apply filters to our photos to joke around. The truth is that I don't like it very much.

People use filters to alter reality and tell the story they want. Not satisfied with their current affairs, they use filters for everything, always wishing to improve what their lens captures. But if you look at a beautiful sunrise, a flower, or the moon in all its splendor, you will realize that God's creation doesn't need filters. In fact, His universe alone tells the excellent story of His existence and His power.

Some think the story is incomplete and we need more. God has given us more. He has given us the truth, without filters, in the Holy Scriptures. Today I invite you to go deeper, without fear, without filters, just as you are, without excuses, into the study of the Word of God.

May the Lord bless you and build you up with every step you take and remember, without a filter, you look beautiful.

I love you in the love of Christ,

Marta

# Table of Contents

Spiritual Life .....	4
Women who bring about change .....	7
Who controls your walk? .....	10
Stand in the middle of the test .....	13
Serving your family with love .....	15
The Life of Phoebe Palmer .....	17
A Model of Prudence .....	20
At the wrong time in the wrong place .....	23
Obeying by Faith .....	26
Power for the one who suffers .....	29
Individual Beauty .....	31
Anything is possible! .....	34
Icebreaker .....	37

**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder  
**Subject:** Huldah  
**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 34:22-28  
**Theme:** Spiritual Life  
**Purpose:** That women understand their role as a bearer of peace.



### **Introduction:**

After priest Hilkiah discovered the book of the law during the reconstruction work of Solomon's temple, Huldah declared that the book they found was indeed the authentic Word of God and prophesied destruction for those who didn't follow the instructions and mandates from the Book of the Law of God. In addition, she confirms to King Josiah that he won't see the destruction of the nation because of his repentance. This woman was a prophetess who lived in the new quarter of Jerusalem, whose husband was a guardian of the garments, but whom the king sought to consult. This tells us that Huldah's ministry was accepted and that she had authority, not only in the temple, but also in the city. And although Huldah isn't the only one who prophesies in the Bible, she is the only one whose prophecy is completely preserved. Why did the king and the priests come to her? What made her different? I hope this study answers these questions.

### **Context:**

- She was married to Shallum and lived in Jerusalem in the New Quarter, a suburb of the capital.
- She was a woman with her own ministry.
- Women prophetess' were recognized by the political and religious leaders of the country.
- She was the first person to recognize a book of the Law as Holy Scriptures of the Word of God.
- Contemporary of the prophet Jeremiah.
- She inspired a king and a nation to repent before God.
- Her story is found in 2 Kings 22 and 2 Chronicles 34:22-28.

**Proposition: Peace with God through Jesus Christ gives us inner peace that is made plain to those around us.**

- I. **Huldah had inner peace:** The Bible says that the priests and the king's men went to the house of Huldah looking for her to tell them what kind of book they had found while repairing the house of God. And it's understood that if they went looking for her, it was because they had a good relationship with her. She was a contemporary with other important prophets of the time. However, they went to seek God's advice

through this woman. In addition to having a good relationship with the high officials of the nation, Huldah had an excellent relationship with God. That is the most important. That was the source of her peace. Inner peace is a state of full well-being that arises from a correct relationship with God. This peace occurs when we have been justified by the blood of Jesus. The forgiveness of Jesus and the cleansing of the heart frees us from the power of sin and guilt. When we trust him, when we obey him, when we believe his Word, we serve him and he has control of our life, we can enjoy inner peace.

- II. **What can rob us of inner peace?** Several factors can rob us of our inner peace. For example:
- a. Not hearing the voice of God - God's grace allows us to complain, but we can't misuse it. We must be attentive to what God says to us. When we get discouraged and don't heed his Word, we can lose our inner peace. The Lord will always speak peace to our lives and give us the right direction for each moment. The Psalmist said in Psalm 85:8 *"I will listen to what God the Lord says; he promises peace to his people, his faithful servants—but let them not turn to folly."* How important it is to hear the voice of God! The voice of God calms our emotions. It focuses us on what is really essential.
  - b. Problems with our peers - When we have problems in our relationships with other people, it's hard to be calm. How can we have peace if we are always fighting with the people around us? This doesn't mean that we all have the same opinions, nor the same ideals, but we can live in harmony with each other in the midst of our diversity. We don't have to abandon our convictions; we just need to learn to express them in an atmosphere of mutual respect and generous friendliness. God has made us all different, with different personalities and we can learn to value and respect each one. 2 Corinthians 13:11 *"Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you."*
  - c. Anxiety steals our inner peace - Anxiety can affect our health, consume our thoughts, affect our productivity, affect our dealings with others and reduce our ability to trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Many people today suffer from anxiety. Some hide it because they think they must be strong and invincible. The best thing we can do is recognize our anxieties and fears before God and receive true peace from Him. We can have peace when we walk in the Spirit. He will protect us from all anxiety and worry.

Philippians 4:7 *“And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

1 Peter 5:7 *“Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.”*

**Conclusion:** The king and the priests of Israel went to the prophetess Huldah to receive a word of peace for the nation and for their lives. Huldah's relationship with God distinguished her among others. Our relationship with God can also distinguish us as a person who has the peace of God because our heart is clean from sin. Therefore, you can be the one with the good word, which is balanced, and which is good, wise advice for others. I am fully convinced that the woman filled with the Holy Spirit has the best news that anyone can hear. Gospel news, the good news of Salvation for the peace of all! The work of Christ in us, through his Holy Spirit results in a deep and lasting inner peace. It isn't the immediate peace of satisfaction for our own work. That's good, but it's temporary. This peace doesn't mean the ending of conflict either. The peace that Christ can give you personally, or others through you, transcends the circumstances that you are going through. Jesus fills us with confidence, power and authority to overcome without fear of the past, present and future.

**Reflection:**

Let's do an exercise: Ask another person if you have inner peace today.

Proceed to find the root of the lack of peace in your life, starting with the status of your spiritual life.

Can you ask the Lord to cleanse your heart and give you peace within?

**Keyword: Inner Peace**

State of tranquility and harmony in the mind and in the heart. It consists of freedom from guilt, hostility and anxiety. Jesus promised this to His followers (John 14:27). It is a real experience for believers living by the guidance of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). The only requirement is a correct relationship with God and it's possible through faith in the atoning work of Jesus Christ. Repentance and obedience to God, and settling accounts with others, go hand in hand with peace.

Taylor, 1984.

**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder  
**Subject:** family love, thankful service  
**Scripture:** Numbers 27:1-11  
**Theme:** Women who bring about change  
**Purpose:** Recognize that woman of faith can transform their immediate and future environment.



### **Introduction:**

The book of Numbers tells us the story of the daughters of Zelophehad. Do you know the meaning of the name Zelophehad? The name means: protection from fear. But I only know the real protection against any fear, and it is faith in Jesus Christ. He has told us: "Do not fear, I am with you."

These five girls came before Moses, the Priest Eleazar, the leaders and the entire congregation at the entrance to the tent of meeting (Numbers 27:2). This was an unheard-of event! Women seeking in audience before the leadership of Israel, never, and trying to change the country's inheritance laws, much less! In the previous chapter Moses had conducted a census of the people and in it appeared the names of all the men of Israel according to their chiefs of each tribe, clans and families. But women weren't counted at all, as if they had no value. This makes me go back to my childhood. In my town they announced the local activities over loudspeakers in the neighborhoods. And there was an advertiser who shouted: "Big dance, men enter for five pesos and women are worthless." That was his way of saying that the ladies wouldn't have to pay. It was free for women! We laughed when we heard it. But I want you to know you're worth it, you're worth a lot. So, the five daughters armed themselves with faith and went straight to the source of authority to have their voice heard.

I am sure the sisters had butterflies in their stomachs, but they made their request with wisdom and reasonable explanations. First, they highlighted his father's name, clarifying that he was an honest man who didn't mix with the rebels (27:3). Then they explained that in the absence of male children, their father's house would be left without someone to inherit it. The result: Moses himself took their request before God. And God's answer? These girls are right (v. 27:6-7). And so, the five sisters received their father's inheritance.

Let's look at three lessons we can learn from this portion of God's Word.

### **Proposition: God protects his daughters and their rights.**

- I. **The daughters of Zelophehad put their faith into action** - They were five single women, but that didn't make them victims. They didn't make a big deal of the fact that they were orphans, they didn't talk all at one without meaning, they weren't angry with God because they had no brothers and their circumstances were difficult. They could have gone from tent to tent complaining and gaining supports to their cause to manipulate the leaders, but that was not their way. They were noble and holy women who put their faith in the Word of God and in the provision that God

had always made to Israel. They were willing to risk everything, turning to Moses and the leaders because of their confidence in Jehovah. Because of their trust and faith, these young women found grace and help. They were protected against all fear.

Are you afraid of a situation? What have you done about it? Sometimes I have been tempted to talk about my fears, to announce and complain about them, instead of facing them with faith in the Lord. But I have learned that we shouldn't run away or hide from what is difficult or what we fear, especially when we know we are doing the right thing. May these five women inspire us to ask the Lord to use us to change those unjust things that we're not satisfied with.

- II. Zelophehad's daughters didn't live only for the present** - The daughters of Zelophehad lived subject to the promises of a better future. They were asking for an inheritance in a land they had never seen, the promised land. Numbers 26 tells about how the Promised Land would be divided among the people. The previous generations were fearful people and because of their lack of faith in the promises of God, they all died in the desert and wouldn't enter the Promised Land. But the daughters of Zelophehad believed, they wanted to go there, they claimed their inheritance in the place that God promised them through Moses.

Do you have faith for the future? Jesus promised a special place for us. He said he was going to prepare it. That place isn't of this world, it isn't on this earth, it's heavenly. This world isn't our home, we are just passing through, on our way to our true home. Our heritage is in heaven. We can't live thinking only about today but we need to think about eternity. How I long to finally see the place that God has prepared for us, to be with the Lord in the Heavenly Promised Land. May we have the faith of these women to believe, with all certainty that an eternal Paradise awaits us. John 14:1-3 *"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am."*

- III. The faith of the daughters of Zelophehad changed the situation** - If we want changes, we must change the way we act. Certainly, God works to transform his power within us through the presence of his Holy Spirit. But the wonderful thing is that He involves us as collaborators in what he is doing in our lives and at the same time uses us to also transform the lives of others. The result of these women's faith in God was that they made a change in the inheritance laws of Israel, which benefited them, but it would also be a precedent for future generations of women. Can we have firm faith in God to change situations in our lives? Hebrews 11:6 *"And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him."*

Zelophehad's daughters were young, innocent, but intelligent. They were focused on their well-being and that of others. They had suffered the great loss of their father and without him it seemed that they had no protection. But they had been raised in the fear of God, knowing the right and the wrong. They relied on this and when they turned to God, God was a father to each one of them.

**Conclusion:** Sometimes we think that because we are of the Lord, automatically his blessings will be poured out upon us. Then we are disappointed when this isn't the case. Many times, blessings come after we have passed through very difficult times. Stand before the Lord in faith, even if your request takes you out of your comfort zone and watch how God will work in you and through you despite your shyness and your fears. There is a time for everything, says the Word of God (Ecclesiastes 3). Therefore, sometimes it is time to confront, to right the wrong. Confront, not with violence, or a fighting spirit, but with faith in Him who can do anything: Jesus Christ.

**Reflection:**

Are you living for eternity?  
What causes you fear?  
Is God troubling you to face something you need to change?  
Are you willing to make a difference for the next generations?

**Keyword: Inheritance**

It refers to the benefits we receive for being children of God.

In the Old Testament it relates to the covenant of the inheritance promised to Abraham and the patriarchs. The equivalent in the New Testament is God's covenant to his people through his Son. The apostle Paul reasons that if we are children of God, we are heirs of the Father. In Christ, we become heirs of all the blessings of our Heavenly Father. Obedience is the condition to enjoy this inheritance. Taylor, 1984.



**Women's Bible Study**    2020 Discipleship  
Resource Folder

**Subject:** Faith, Redemption, Love  
**Scripture:** Ruth 1:16-17  
**Theme:** Who controls your walk?  
**Purpose:** That women learn to depend on God in all areas of their lives.

**Introduction:**

Ruth's book has many important teachings and principles for today's woman. One of the most important is that God takes care of each one of us and we can trust our lives in his hands. Your Heavenly Father takes care of you and keeps you wherever you go. He protects you in any circumstance and directs you to a life of love and peace. One person said that Ruth and Naomi suffered so much, that it's as if this book was the female version of the book of Job. After becoming a widow in Moab, Ruth follows her mother-in-law, Naomi, to Bethlehem and doesn't leave her. But both were destitute, they had nothing to live on. Ruth goes to work in the wheat fields and a wealthy relative sees her. Boaz was a relative of Naomi's and he helps them. He redeems her from her widowhood and marries her. In time, a son is born to them, and they name him Obed. Obed became the grandfather of King David, from whom Jesus Christ the king of salvation would descend for all mankind. We can assert that Ruth accepted her misfortune, trusted the Lord, even in the death of her dearest loved ones, and walked where God led her. There she received redemption. What a beautiful story of God's redemption.

**Context:**

- Other than Esther, Ruth is the only woman in the Bible with her own book of the Bible.
- She was born a pagan and married a Jew.
- Hers is one of the most beautiful love stories in the history of love stories.
- Her life of surrender when walking with God contrasts with that of Orpah, her sister-in-law.
- She had nothing for her own livelihood, nor for her mother-in-law's.
- Ruth decided to follow the path back to Bethlehem with Naomi, her mother-in-law.
- Ruth had not been able to have children from her first husband, then she became a widow.
- She was not afraid of the new, nor of working.
- She was a determined and compassionate woman.
- She received redemption and restitution from her closest relative.
- She was honored in Israel.

## **Proposition:**

- I. **Woman of compassion and love** - Noemi and Ruth had suffered losses. Ruth lost her husband, but Naomi lost her husband and her two children. Now she was a helpless widow who needed to fend for herself. How would she survive if she had no strength or resources? It was a desperate situation. Naomi said that the almighty God had bitterly afflicted her, so she should be called Mara (Ruth 1:20). She immediately encouraged her daughters-in-law to say goodbye to her and return to their hometowns. But Ruth refused. Her compassion and kindness didn't allow her to leave her mother-in-law alone in that situation. After everything, she was released and rewarded by the Lord. God calls us to walk as he walks, and this walk includes love for others, not only in words, but in action.
  
- II. **Ruth built relationships that lasted** - The first relationship she built was with her mother-in-law. And the second was with Boaz, a man older than her by several years. Boaz was a man of money, he had servants, wealth, and land. But Boaz, although he apparently had everything, lacked a wife and a family of his own. What made him notice Ruth? In addition to her physical appearance, Ruth captivated him by her way of being. This woman was known for her great character. Ruth 3:11 says: "don't be afraid. I will do for you all you ask. All the people of my town know that you are a woman of noble character." Her walk, her work ethic, her integrity, fidelity and good character had earned her a good reputation and impressed Boaz as well.

The relationships that last are built on the foundation of trust and are maintained through commitment, devotion, good communication, fidelity and loyalty. The Holy Spirit shapes our character so that we can live in a holy way with those around us, to establish and maintain strong bonds of love and friendship with others.

- III. **Ruth walked where God directed her** - Ruth left Moab and headed for Bethlehem, directed by God. Naomi also needed to return to the way of the Lord. This teaches us that no matter where we are, if God isn't there, we need to direct our steps back to the way of the Lord. Ruth didn't lose faith, resulting in hope and new opportunities for her and her mother-in-law. Hunger made them return to God. In fact, in the shadow of death, tears and pain, she was strengthened by the Lord. Although her future was uncertain, she believed in the God of Jacob. Even though she was a Moabite, she walked with God. She turned her back on her past and sadness, and placed her future into the hands of God. She had nothing to lose. Her commitment was firm in the direction God

determined. For this reason her faith was honored in many ways. God changed her sad walk in joy.

IV. **In the midst of scarcity, God will always provide** - God knew Ruth and Naomi's situation; he knew of their material and emotional shortage. But what was not seen was that she also experienced a spiritual shortage. They had their empty hands. Nothing to offer God, but they offered their lives to go back to Bethlehem, to the house of bread, the place of physical sustenance, but also spiritual. Sometimes people live in shortages and think they have nothing to offer God or others. But I want you to know that the Lord is the one who takes our life out of the hole and crowns us with favors and mercies (Psalm 103:4). When you offer the Lord your whole heart, he will provide for your need. At the end of the story, Ruth received what she needed: the redemption of her life. She was released from the status of a widow and a helpless woman by her relative. We have a relative who has brought us the provision we needed, Christ, the Only Begotten of the Father, has redeemed us from loneliness, scarcity and destitution, to make us his own and give us all things together with Him.

**Reflection:**

Discuss a situation in which you have found yourself depending on God in order to get ahead.  
In addition to physical sustenance, how do you receive spiritual sustenance?  
Are you hungry for God?  
Tell the group your salvation story.

**Keyword: Redemption**

It is the means for salvation and his motivation is love, focused on Jesus Christ as Redeemer.

It refers to a ransom or price for release.

It comes from the word go'el, redeemer or closest relative who had the responsibility of buying back the inheritance that belonged to the family so that the lineage didn't end. Jesus is our go'el just as Boaz was Ruth's.

Redemption entails provision for the new life and the future life.

Taylor, 1984.



**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder  
**Subject:** Strength, constancy  
**Scripture:** 2 Chronicles 22:10-12 and 23:1-3  
**Theme:** Stand in the middle of the test  
**Purpose:** That women understand that there is no proof that they can't overcome.

### **Introduction:**

When the queen mother, Athaliah, discovered that her son Ahaziah had died, she proceeded to destroy all the other members of the royal family who had the possibility of being heirs to the throne. She wanted to secure her position as Queen of Judah. But Jehosheba, the king's sister, found her little nephew, Prince Joash, from the midst of the massacre and hid him so that his own grandmother would not kill him. That little boy became the only survivor of the descendants of Ahaziah. Seven years later, Jehosheba's husband, who was a priest, installed him on the throne, anointing him as king in the temple of Jehovah.

Because of Jehosheba's courage to challenge her aunt, David's royal lineage was preserved. His story is mentioned in 2 Kings 11: 2-3 and 2 Chronicles 22 and 23.

### **Context:**

- Jehosheba was the sister of King Ahaziah's father; she was a princess of Judah.
- At the death of her brother, her life and that of her family were also in danger.
- She had an important role in God's plan.
- She was married to the high priest Jehoiada.
- She was the mother of the prophet Zechariah.
- Because of her cunning and ingenuity, the lineage from which the Messiah would come was preserved.
- God used her for the sake of his name and in response to his covenant with David and his offspring.

### **Proposition: When a woman led by God stands up, she brings salvation and blessing.**

- I. **Jehosheba overcame obstacles** - This woman's faith shone in dark times. She and her husband chose not to walk in the evil steps of the rest of their family, and did not contaminate themselves with idols, nor surrendered to excessive ambition. Instead she followed in the footsteps of her grandfather Jehoshaphat, despite all the obstacles. The risk that Jehosheba went through to rescue the child Joash was enormous and all for

preserving the lineage of promise. She was directed by God in the midst of the death threat of the evil Athaliah. They trusted that God had a plan for their lives and that of little Joash, believing that God could overcome all obstacles.

- II. **Jehosheba exceeded expectations** - Athaliah was a woman with a mission. Her mission was diabolical. She was a violent and impulsive woman. What a mistake for her! The Word of God says in Ecclesiastes 7: 9 *“Do not be quickly provoked in your spirit, for anger resides in the lap of fools.”* However, Athaliah didn’t expect Jehosheba’s rebellion and was badly surprised. If she caught Jehosheba, she was surely going to destroy her. Because of her courage in the test, Jehosheba teaches us that courage and good decision making are not limited to just one gender. Who would have thought that an ordinary woman would have saved the royal lineage of David's house from suffering extinction by a brave act of love? Sadly, at the end of his days, Joash didn’t remember this act of love and ordered the death of the prophet Zechariah, son of Jehosheba (2 Chronicles 24:20-21).

**Conclusion:** Athaliah and Jehosheba are contrasting characters. One is a murderer, the other a savior. One destroys, the other rescues. Together, Jehosheba and her husband built a long-term plan to overcome the trials they were living in and secure Judah's future. In the Bible, we see that God has executed a well thought out plan for the salvation of us and of all mankind. He sustains us in the midst of trials and gives us the wisdom and strength to succeed.

1 Corinthians 10:13 *“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.”*

**Reflection:**

Can you describe salvation and some of the blessings that have resulted from the courage of Jehosheba?  
What obstacles do you face at this time?  
How do you think you can overcome expectations?

**Keyword:** Test

to ascertain the worth, capability, or endurance of a person by subjection to certain trials.

The idea that all of life is a test is spread throughout the Bible.

Taylor, 1984



**Women's Bible Study** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder

**Subject:** Family love, thankful service

**Scripture:** Luke 4:38

**Theme:** Serving your family with love

**Purpose:** At any stage of life, we can be useful to God and others.

**Introduction:**

I've heard a lot of jokes about Peter's mother-in-law. In my Latin American context, mothers-in-law may not have a very good reputation, but that can change! For example, my husband is the only man in his house, and his mother greatly pampered him. When we were married, my mother-in-law gave me many instructions and was even a bit strict with me, but the love of the Lord in our lives softened the relationship in such a way that today, my mother-in-law is like a mother to me. The biblical portion that tells us about the healing of Peter's mother-in-law shows us that we can live in harmony with an extended family member and that we are called to take care of each other. It also shows us that in all stages of life, we can be grateful to the Lord and serve him according to our strength. Is it a heavy burden for you to serve some of the members of your family and others?

**Proposition: Transformed to serve God and others with gratitude and love.**

**Context about the woman:**

- She had no name; we only know that she was Peter's mother-in-law.
- In addition to serving Jesus, she also served many others.
- Her social environment revolved around her home.
- The honor of the house was restored when she got up to serve.
- The event was a private activity of Jesus.
- A fever at that time could be a subject of life or death.
- She is the only person healed by Jesus who we can see continued to serve him.
- She did much more than continue her tasks, she humbly served Jesus.
- Serving in a Jewish home as a woman of that time was very hard.
- Her service teaches us how the life of service of the believer should be.
- The miracle was double; Jesus healed her and restored her with new strength to serve.
- Other family members were a channel of blessing, for example, her son-in-law.
- The ministry was performed when they were at a time to rest at home.
- The followers of Jesus and their families were also affected by life situations, such as illness.
- There was a son-in-law who behaved like a son.
- There was a mother-in-law who honored her son-in-law by serving the Master.

**Proposition:**

- I. **Transformed to serve Christ** - Peter took his master Jesus into his home, without knowing how many blessings their lives would have. With Jesus' touch, Peter's mother-in-law was healed. Her physical healing was vitally important. What is our family like when the main character of the house is in poor health? So much is lacking when a mother or mother-in-law is missing when they are sick! All household routines are altered. When Jesus saw the situation, he was moved to immediate compassion. Jesus comes into our lives to bring all that is good: health, blessing, salvation. At Jesus' touch, the mother-in-law received the complete healing of her body and was transformed. Her reaction: She rose immediately to serve Jesus. When Jesus transforms our lives, change is always positive. Jesus transforms us to live better. 1 Samuel 12:24 *"But be sure to fear the Lord and serve him faithfully with all your heart; consider what great things he has done for you."* We can express our immense gratitude to God, as Peter's mother-in-law did, by placing our lives at his service.
- II. **Transformed to serve others** – We see Peter taking care of his mother-in-law and a mother-in-law who expresses her love and thanks to those around her. Scripture shows us that Peter's mother-in-law served all who were in the house, not only Jesus, but everyone. Without complaining! How would her daughter and son-in-law, Peter, have felt? Surely very relieved and at ease with the generous attention of their mother/ mother-in-law. If we are followers of Christ, our lives have also been transformed for our good. We have been impacted by the gospel of the Good News. Jesus strengthens us and enlightens us with his peace and love. He has also promised us a future that we await with hope. But in the meantime, what will we do? One of the best ways to serve the Lord is through service to others. Whether it is bringing water and food to the hungry, toys to orphans, clothing to the needy or visiting the sick, the Word teaches us that when we do these things, it is as if we did it to Jesus himself.

**Conclusion:** Today, Jesus wants to include you in his plan to be a blessing to others through service. Only then will you feel complete, fulfilling your purpose. Invest your time in what is really worth it, even if it's time for your TV show. Let's do to others as the Master has done for us.

**Reflection:**

Serving Jesus is the best way to live life.  
What transformation has Jesus made in your life?  
Does his work in your life cause you to serve him?

**Keyword: Service**

Service Isn't servitude. Service is the work done for another according to their instructions. Service for God is to fulfill his orders according to his will. Serving God is our privilege and our decision. To serve Christ, one must follow him through the death of oneself and the fruits that result from his death. He must be grateful and joyful and it is the responsibility of all believers.

Taylor, 1984.

**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder  
**Subject:** Holiness and Commitment  
**Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 15:58  
**Theme:** The Life of Phoebe Palmer



**Introduction:** Born in New York in 1807 in a very devout Methodist family, she married Walter Palmer at age 19. However, although her husband was a Christian and they shared the ministry, she always played the leading role. Unfortunately, although she was active in the church, she always had doubts about her relationship with God. She didn't feel that she had a real experience of conversion nor did she feel like a "daughter of God." This marriage had 7 children, of which 4 died in childhood, but in the face of the suffering of the irreparable loss of their children, they stood firm and strengthened by the power of the Lord. Phoebe's sister, named Sarah, introduced her to the doctrine of holiness and entire sanctification, which impacted her deeply, and all her doubts regarding her relationship with the Lord disappeared. She had an experience of sanctification. She never doubted that she was accepted and loved by God and was called to the exclusive service of the Lord.

The Church of the Nazarene has included women in ministry roles since its inception. Let's see how the ministry of this courageous woman developed.

**Proposition: God calls both men and women to his service in different areas of ministry.**

- I. **Beginnings of Phoebe's ministry** - She started, like many of us, offering a Bible study class for young women in her congregation. Suddenly, the class became very popular, so much so that people didn't fit in the classroom because her teaching methods reflected her passion for Christ and the work he had done inside her. Her passion for teaching others the biblical doctrine she had learned also led her to participate in camps and other activities, sometimes being the first time a woman had done so. And everything she put her hand to do thrived. She was a very outstanding person, meeting the needs of the marginalized, orphans, prisoners, widows, and children. She even fought for the liberation of slaves. She also became involved in the organization and planting of new churches in poor places, evangelized the Jews in New York, and was instrumental in sending missionaries to China for the first time in 1847.

Her life inspires us to surrender and commit ourselves more and more, and indicates that there is much more to do.

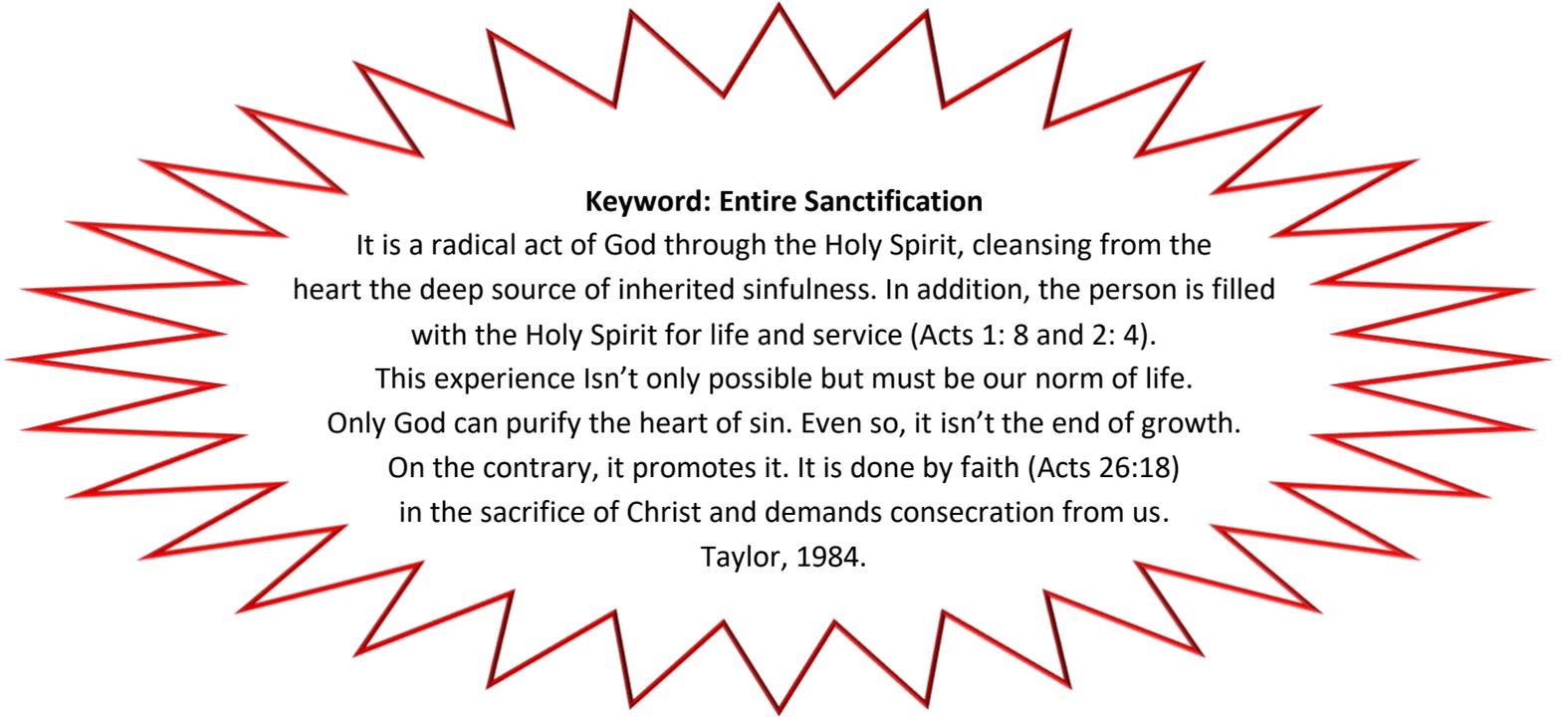
- II. **Ministry of preaching** - Phoebe was a woman who looked after her family, her husband and her ministry. She stood out especially for her deep spiritual and theological teaching by teaching the gift of entire sanctification as a second work of grace subsequent to justification. And she had this Bible study group that met in her home once a week for 40 years. University professors, pastors, missionaries, and lay people came and she encouraged them all to testify of what God was doing in their hearts. A wonderful revival was born from these encounters, with hundreds of people accepting Jesus and became entirely sanctified in a home Bible study!
- III. **Characteristics of Phoebe** - Some have described her physically as a simple woman with little personal appeal. However, she was an excellent speaker, a serious and fervent woman. Some have opined that she was too strict and severe, such as when on a cruise from England she criticized a minister aboard the ship for participating in board games with young people. She also organized prayer times aboard the ship and didn't understand why the other ministers had not done so earlier. For her, it was important that all people were part of the mission of the church, that not doing so was considered a crime since people died spiritually if they were not evangelized.

Phoebe was a very determined and compassionate person, full of the love of Jesus, living in the Victorian era with very particular and strict ideas of the practice of the life of holiness. How is it different from the lives of holiness that women lead today? In what aspects are your personality characteristics better or worse?

**Conclusion:** Phoebe Palmer proclaimed the Word of God, propagating Wesleyan theology with much fervor, and witnessed a great revival as a result of her ministry. From her experience of entire sanctification onwards, she was never again insecure or afraid to develop her ministry. Her concern for the salvation of lives was what motivated her to serve tirelessly and earned her the nickname "the mother of the holiness movement." I really like the way of thinking of this holy woman of God. She was convinced that she was placed on earth to be a collaborator in the work of God, and this assured her of the Lord's blessing in everything she undertook. Her work would never be in vain, as the apostle Paul says. Her faith and dependence on God are admirable.

**Reflection:**

Have you felt overwhelmed by the responsibilities of family, marriage and the church?  
How do you think you can organize to accomplish everything?  
Do you think you have to stop caring about God/ministry so you don't have to sacrifice your family?



**Keyword: Entire Sanctification**

It is a radical act of God through the Holy Spirit, cleansing from the heart the deep source of inherited sinfulness. In addition, the person is filled with the Holy Spirit for life and service (Acts 1: 8 and 2: 4).

This experience isn't only possible but must be our norm of life.

Only God can purify the heart of sin. Even so, it isn't the end of growth.

On the contrary, it promotes it. It is done by faith (Acts 26:18) in the sacrifice of Christ and demands consecration from us.

Taylor, 1984.

**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder  
**Subject:** Celebration of women, roles, Importance  
**Scripture:** Titus 2:5 and 1 Samuel 25  
**Theme:** A Model of Prudence  
**Purpose:** That women be prudent and courageous when making decisions.



### **Introduction:**

In his Word, God expresses that prudence is a virtue. How can we learn to be prudent? Perhaps we can learn from the imperishable example of a woman of faith like Abigail. The apostle Paul's letter to Titus urges that the holy woman be prudent. We can define this in two ways: the quality of behavior so as to avoid causing offenses or revealing undue information, and the freedom to decide the best course of action in a particular situation. How can the Christian woman learn this? Of women of faith whose stories are preserved in the Bible, a figure stands out in prudence: Abigail.

### **Context:**

In 1 Samuel 25:1-24, we see that King David is fleeing from Saul and arrives in the desert of Paran. While he was hiding there, his men were taking care of their flocks of sheep and included in their guard the flocks of a rich and unfriendly man from the neighboring fields called Nabal. When it was time to shear the sheep, a time of partying, entertainment and celebration for the work done, David sent his servants to visit Nabal and request some food so that his servants could also celebrate. However, Nabal flatly refused and insulted and disparaged David and his men. Faced with such an answer, David became outraged and quickly planned a retaliation.

But a servant of Abigail informed her of the tragedy that was about to occur. Something had to be done immediately!

### **Proposition: The woman full of the Lord acquires prudence for every situation.**

The servant told her: *"Now think it over and see what you can do, because disaster is hanging over our master and his whole household. He is such a wicked man that no one can talk to him."* (v. 17)

### **Let's meet Abigail**

- She was married (probably an arranged marriage, according to the customs of the time).
- She was a woman of faith in God.
- She was beautiful, wise and generous.

- She was pleasant in character because she was liked by her husband's servants.
- She had a rich but unpleasant husband. Nabal was rude and hard-hearted.
- It's very likely that she had been emotionally abused.

### Abigail's Challenges

- Covering up her husband's constant faults.
- Living in peace with an evil man.
- Preserving her integrity and strength of character in front of your husband.
- Defending her family.
- A lot of pressure and stress.
- Acting reasonably and quickly.
- Getting ahead of the disaster.

### Abigail's Solution

- She believed God's promises to David.
- She didn't waste time.
- She prepared a peace offering.
- She was humble.
- She planned and carried out her complete plan.
- She shared an excellent meal.
- She supervised and made sure everyone had the necessary provisions.
- She confronted the problem in person with words of peace from God (she referred to God at least 7 times between verses 26-31).
- Her prudence saved lives.

**Conclusion:** Nabal believed himself a prudent man with material things. Abigail knew David's reputation and went and asked for mercy, even blaming herself for her husband's imprudence. We can see in her dialogue with David that she had a deep faith in the purposes of God with David. She softened David's heart by reminding him of what God had said about him (v.30), and made him rethink the evil he intended to do. Abigail was cautious about immaterial and eternal things. Because of her bravery and prudence, she noticed and prevented a family tragedy in time. This woman's trust in God and her prudent spirit saved the lives of many. After the death of her husband, King David took her as his wife. Hold your life of promises in the Word of the Lord knowing that led by God, we will make the best decisions in any circumstance.

**Reflection:** Many situations in our life require that we use prudence and courage to determine the best course of action to follow. Have you ever found yourself in a situation that requires prudence on your part? Do you reveal information, decide on the lesser evil, or what have you done? Have you been able to make good decisions on time? Do you find it difficult to make wise decisions under pressure, or do you tend to postpone decision making? In which of these areas do you think you need the intervention and help of the Holy Spirit?

**Keyword: PRUDENCE**

Using skill and good judgment in the use of resources and making wise decisions; caution or circumspection as to danger or risk. Quality of mature character that needs to be exercised in delicate social tensions. The life of faith doesn't require recklessness or carelessness, only risks inherent in total obedience to God. The people of God must learn to be prudent, not only for the temporal, but also for eternity.  
This was the teaching of Jesus in Luke 16:9.

**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder

**Subject:** Abuse, Injustice, Violence

**Scripture:** 2 Samuel 11:1-53

**Theme:** At the wrong time in the wrong place

**Purpose:** Let women know that they can be restored from any abusive situation.



**Introduction:**

Spring evokes in me memories of happy days, planting gardens, cleaning the home and preparing to receive Holy Week. I am sure that for Bathsheba, spring meant something different. One spring she was in the wrong place at the wrong time, and we add, with the wrong person for the wrong reasons. A tragic story of seduction, intrigue, and failure was used by God to continue the most precious lineage in history: the lineage of the Messiah.

It Isn't easy to study the character of this woman (is any of us easy?), although she has been mostly recognized because she was the woman that King David saw while she enjoyed her bath, and called her in his presence. The result was that she had an adulterous relationship with the king and became pregnant. She later had five sons with David, among them King Solomon, was a favorite wife, and became queen mother. Above all, Bathsheba was a woman of influence who remained faithful to her husband the king for the rest of her days, and saved the throne for her eldest son.

**Proposition: No matter what others have done to us, our lives can be restored by God and used for their purposes of good.**

- I. **Did Bathsheba fail? (v. 2-5)** - We don't want to ignore the participation that Bathsheba had in sin, but the story isn't as simple as it seems. David was supposed to have gone with his regiment to battle. But, already advancing in years (approximately 50 years), he didn't want to go to the battlefield, but instead stayed in his palace located on a hill. From up there he saw this beautiful young woman at the time of her bath. When he asked who she was, they informed him that she was married. But that didn't stop the king. The Bible doesn't tell us what say Bathsheba had in the beginning of her relationship with the king. It only indicates that he sent for her, and she came and slept with him. That is more than enough. In her culture and situation, King David had all the power in his hands and she had no right to refuse. He could do what he wanted with her, and he did. This was a game of power and control for David, but unfortunately for Bathsheba, it resulted in the loss of her husband, her dignity and her reputation. Although some movies or books represent Bathsheba as a seducer, the Bible doesn't tell

us that this was the reality of her intention. What was her participation? Was it an active and voluntary participation, or was she dragged by the power and control of the king? Apparently, she was only performing her cleansing ritual in the late afternoon. So, it is very likely that what King David did to her was an abuse and an injustice, and she couldn't be held accountable for his sin. Sometimes, the sin of one person is enough for many to reap the tragic results. Why do we sometimes blame the victims? Examples: the rape victim is blamed because she was exercising at night or the robbery victim is blamed because she didn't put all the locks on the house.

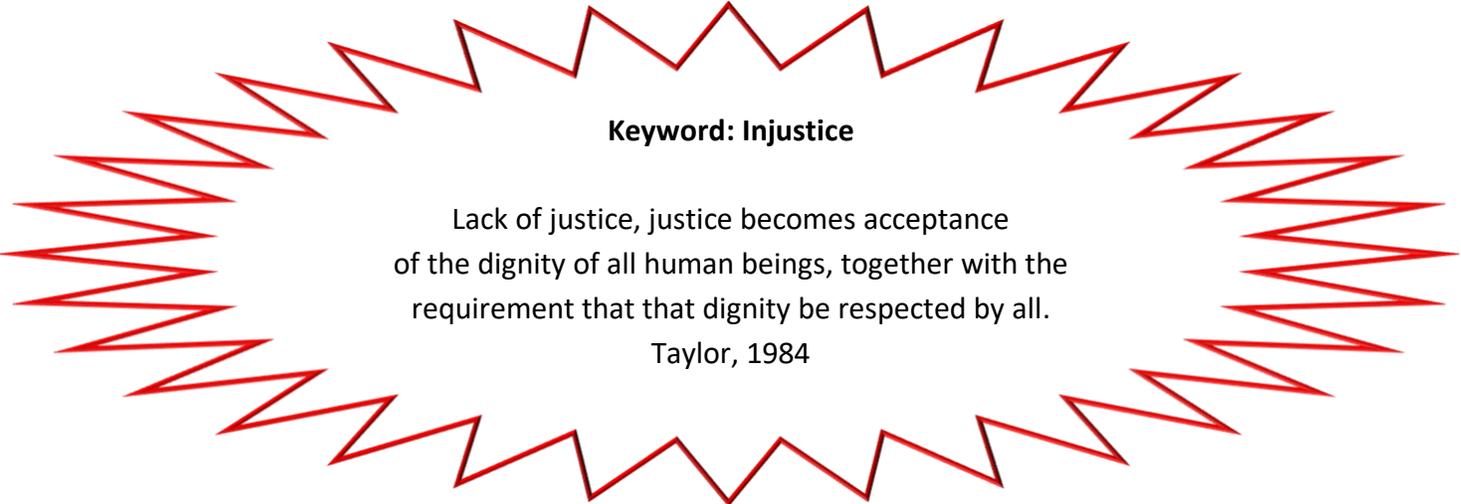
- II. **Happy Marriage?** - Through an act of injustice, David married Bathsheba. Then when they were waiting for their baby, the prophet Nathan introduced himself and gave David a word of confrontation that led him to confess his sin. But the baby got sick anyway, and despite all the money his parents had, and all the care and love they gave him, the little boy died. Sin brought fatal consequences that affected David and Bathsheba's marriage. What pain she would have experienced! Apparently, the pain united them (2 Samuel 12:24-25) and they had another son, Solomon (which means the Lord loves him, and comes from the word Shalom or peace). It reminds us of the words of the apostle Paul in Romans 8:28: *"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him..."*
- III. **Victims of violence** - Bathsheba found herself in a terrible situation. Currently, our countries have laws that protect women's rights against any kind of abuse and injustice. The woman has the right to refuse any kind of intimate or sexual advance that she doesn't want. Accused rapists and abusers will be tried for due process in the country. Bathsheba had no options at the time, except that God was working something special in her case. The Church of the Nazarene abhors any act of abuse or violence against any person. It is never too late to seek help in case of abuse. Don't be afraid. Our pastors and ministerial leaders, with pleasure, can guide and extend all possible help. Sharing our stories can also save others.

**Reflection:**

Share details of Bathsheba's story, from the biblical perspective only, and compare it to the traditional perspective we have of it.

Read 2 Samuel 12:4 and discuss the role of Bathsheba in Nathan's story. Does the prophet suggest that she was an accomplice of David?

Do we know someone who is in a situation of abuse today?  
What can you do to help?



**Keyword: Injustice**

Lack of justice, justice becomes acceptance  
of the dignity of all human beings, together with the  
requirement that that dignity be respected by all.

Taylor, 1984



**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder  
**Subject:** Obedience, Faith, Love  
**Scripture:** Esther 2:5-18; 4:10-17  
**Theme:** Obeying by Faith  
**Purpose:** That women learn that it's a blessing to obey God.

**Introduction:**

Esther's book is very special; it is one of the most beautiful stories in the Bible and has much to contribute to today's woman. In her, we see God executing his perfect plan for humanity through people and incidents of daily life. We see God saving his people from extinction through events that seem accidental. And even though the name of God isn't mentioned even once in the book, his Council and his power are visible through everything that happens.

Esther was an orphan who lived with her relative Mordecai in Persia, with a group of Jews who had been taken captive from their land. At that time, King Xerxes wanted to celebrate his victories with a festival that expanded throughout the empire. He was making a display of all the splendor of his reign to be seen by all throughout its provinces. In the excitement of the moment, and because of his drunkenness too, Xerxes made an improper call to the queen, Vashti, to appear before him to show her off to everyone. She felt humiliated and declined the invitation. Faced with the situation, the king was advised to find a new wife and queen for the throne among all the pure young women of the kingdom. He chose Esther from among the candidates.

**Proposition:**

- I. **God has purposes for your life** - Esther came to occupy a very privileged position (Esther 2:17) and went from being an orphan Jew in exile to being the king's favorite and a queen. The events didn't happen by chance, but by God's design. God not only sees the immediate history of each person; he sees the macro history; he has an expanded vision of world events and how they affect his people. This reminds me of Proverbs 16:9 *"We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps."* (NLT). God didn't make a mistake with Esther, and has not made one with you either. Sometimes we spend too much time trying to decipher whether God loves us instead of allowing God to use us according to his purpose and will, exactly in the place where we are. Something greater will come, but we have to wait on Him.

II. **Sometimes we must act against our desires in order to continue in the Purpose of God**

- The king was tricked into proclaiming a decree that ordered the extermination of the Jewish people and Esther. A Jew inside the palace was the only salvation the Jews had. Esther's reaction to knowing this wasn't crazy. "Do you think that I can just walk into the presence of the king? He would kill me, and that wouldn't do anyone any good." But the prophetic voice of her relative Mordecai urging her to fulfill the purpose for which she had been chosen queen (Esther 4:13-14) made her open her eyes and decide to follow God's advice. With the famous phrase, "*if I perish, I perish*" (v. 16). Esther sealed her destiny and that of her people.

Sometimes, what God does in our lives makes sense, but sometimes we don't understand. However, although we may not understand, we need to continue walking by faith, taking risks for God. The best things in the Christian life will cost us and require risks of faith. The time to follow the Lord is now.

I think it is very interesting that in Esther 4: 14, Mordecai told Esther, "*For if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your father's family will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?*" I want to emphasize the phrase, "*And who knows?*" They were not sure of anything. They knew that for some reason, God had allowed this young woman to become queen in a foreign country. They knew that she was the king's wife and that at some point she would have the opportunity to see him and address him with the problem of the Jews. They knew that their God wanted to save them from total extermination because he had given many promises of multiplication and blessing to Abraham and the patriarchs. They knew that Esther already knew the situation and her plan. What they didn't know was how Esther was going to achieve it.

There will be moments in life when you have all the information, you have all the details, you have prayed just as you know how, you have sought God's advice. And even then, you are not sure of things. You don't know how they will turn out. Many times, at that time is when I file them in some corner of my memory and go to sleep and say, "Tomorrow will be another day in which God can speak to me." But Esther waited three days in fasting and prayer and acted. Well, I also had to do that. Act, without all the answers, move on, allowing God to lead me and shape his work.

III. **Trust had its reward** - Esther saved the nation. She appeared before the king without being called and passed the test. Her obedience saved God's people from destruction. Esther 8:17 says that in every province and city, in every place where the decree of the

king arrived, the Jews rejoiced greatly, celebrated big time, and declared a holiday and celebration. Many people in the territory also became Jews for fear of what the Jews could do to them. The reward for Esther's obedience exceeded everyone's expectations. She entered the king's chamber prepared for the worst case, but got the best. Many people followed God. They converted to God because they were inspired by the faith of a woman who changed a nation.

**Conclusion:** Esther was a young woman who obeyed her family and mainly her God. Esther loved God and her Jewish people greatly, and although she didn't have all the answers, she decided to carry out God's perfect plan. Obeying the Lord is always helpful. When others see our radical obedience, even when things don't make sense, they will want what we have. While the world around you looks for answers, trying to figure out how to do things right in life, you may not have all the answers, but you know the God who has them.

**Reflection:**

When was the last time you asked, "What do you want to do through my life, God?"  
Are you ready to obey by faith?



**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder  
**Subject:** Gospel, New Life, Compassion  
**Scripture:** Luke 7:11-17  
**Theme:** Power for the one who suffers.

**Introduction:**

We have all experienced difficult times; the reality of suffering is undeniable. We hear of violence in the streets, in homes; even Christians struggle with serious problems. Therefore, we need the message of hope in the midst of brokenness, and the power that Jesus offers us to overcome our weaknesses. We can't live on false hopes, like the man who saw the light at the end of the tunnel and when he was running towards it, he realized that the light was a train coming. The gospel of Christ does sustain us in the midst of pain. Nain's widow had lost her husband and was destroyed due to the death of her son. In this biblical portion, we see that Jesus resurrected the boy, but there are also deep spiritual truths that we can learn today.

**Proposition: The message of the Word of God gives us hope and empowers us in times of pain and weakness.**

- I. **Real hope through compassion** - In this scene, there are two crowds. One of them was in mourning, the screams, moans and cries of a mother who had lost her son were heard as she followed his coffin to bury him. The second group had been following Jesus, whom they had seen perform great miracles. They came joyful and full of hope. And Jesus, seeing the funeral procession, had compassion for that woman and approached her to give her life and hope. His words: *"Don't cry!"* (v. 13), perhaps they seemed absurd. How can I not cry for my son? But on this occasion, his words were a call for her attention, a call to trust in him. As if Jesus said: "Look at me, Don't look at death. I am life." Amid the mourning and darkness of feeling, Jesus brought the light of hope to an anguished mother and an afflicted community, even though they had not called him. This was a work of his grace. The grace of God is an unmerited favor, and his gospel is of grace. We don't deserve it. We don't have to achieve anything by our works, nor be frustrated by not being good enough, because when we were dead in crimes and sins, Christ gave us life (Ephesians 2:1). Compassion was the lifestyle of Jesus! What's yours?
  
- II. **Real hope through his word** - Although Jesus performed many miracles in various ways, by resurrecting the dead, He spoke His Word. Isaiah 55:11, *"It is the same with my word. I send it out, and it always produces fruit. It will accomplish all I want it to, and it will prosper everywhere I send it."* There is power in the Word of God! The Word causes changes in hopeless situations. I am sure that just as Christ spoke to this dead young

man, he speaks personally to dead sinners today to respond immediately. Jesus continues to speak his words through the gospel given by his servants and his Word written in the Bible. So, it is important for us to turn and lead others towards the Word of God.

- III. **The hope of Jesus gives new life** - Jesus is Lord over death. When Jesus spoke to that young man, it was the weakest moment for all. He was dead, but the dead came to life, instantly. What is the difference between the living and dead? Before being in ministry, my whole family, including myself, worked in a funeral home. Yes, my father had a funeral home and we all worked there. I know the difference between someone who is alive and someone who is dead. The dead have no active vital sign. Nothing. They are inert, lifeless. So are those who are spiritually dead. However, when we receive the new spiritual life that Jesus gives us, one can quickly see the signs of life in us. What signs of spiritual life can you identify in yourself and in other people?

The young man's mother also received life along with her son; she was no longer going to be a dismissed widow. The family relationship was restored. Her son came back to life and they had a precious reunion (v. 15). Joy flooded her heart. Also, the crowd (v. 16) was impacted by the power of Jesus. How does it impact you when a sinner repents, or when someone receives a miracle?

**Conclusion:** When Jesus enters a place, he brings hope of transformation and abundant life that impacts everyone's lives. Let us not miss the opportunity to extend ourselves in compassion towards others who are weak in faith or weak in affliction. The gospel is the power of God and hope in the midst of a painful world to bring to life everything that was dead and make it new.

**Personal testimony:** On December 15, I received a call. My son, age 27, had suffered an accident. We were not informed if he was alive or dead, only that we were to go to the hospital, and then the person hung up immediately. The hospital was an hour away, and on the way, I examined myself: How did I feel about God at that time? Empowered! God was my strength; he was holding me. I said: "Lord, you have given me this young man, may your will be done in his life." My son was far from God. Half an hour away, we received another call. This time a nurse told me, "Mom, we are waiting for you, because you have to move your child to the main trauma center in the country." Although it seems absurd, those words were sweet to me. My son was alive! Today I remember it with tears in my eyes from the pain I experienced. After several months in the hospital, sleepless nights, hard work attending to my boy (he is a giant who is more than two meters tall) with all physical and spiritual care. He has already fully recovered. He has returned to physical life and I continue to pray that he will return completely to spiritual life. My hope is placed in Jesus, who raised the widow's son.



<b>Women's Bible Study:</b>	2020 Discipleship Resource Folder
<b>Subject:</b>	Self-esteem of Women
<b>Scripture:</b>	Genesis 29:17
<b>Theme:</b>	Individual Beauty
<b>Purpose:</b>	Let every woman celebrate her beauty, both inside and out.

### **Introduction: LEAH TEACHES US ABOUT BEAUTY**

Have you noticed that the Bible gives a beautiful description of Rachel, but it says that Leah was not very beautiful? Apparently, Leah was not very graceful in the field of physical beauty. Imagine how she would have felt when her father married her to Jacob using a trap to achieve it. It must have been devastating for her that her own father did such a deceitful thing. It was as if he was telling her, "Daughter, I had to deceive him. Otherwise, no other man was going to love you. You are not beautiful enough to attract a man." Her father thought that the only way that she could get married was by her posing as her younger sister.

That wedding night must have been very difficult and confusing. Imagine trying to enjoy the rain of physical love and pleasure, knowing inside that Jacob's intention of love was not directed at her. How could she stand that, just because the darkness hid the truth? But the first light of day brought revelation. The wife was Leah. Daylight also brought her suffering. She accepted her condition, but it would be like a cold-water bath, because for a woman, being rejected after having intimacy is very hard. We can imagine her crying and lamenting over her broken marriage. Maybe she longed to be as beautiful as her sister Rachel.

But I believe that God's answer was: beauty will not save you, Leah. The reality is that physical beauty could not even save Rachel. The story of two sisters, married to the same man and caught in a rivalry between sisters can show us some wonderful truths about physical beauty and self-esteem of women. Although it happened thousands of years ago, we can apply her experience to the battles for our self-esteem today.

**Proposition: God has created you unique to fulfill his purposes. He has called you, he has blessed you, he has loved you, he has redeemed you and glorifies you in your weakness.**

We'll share three lessons:

- I. All women are unique** - The Word tells us that Leah and Rachel were different, one is described as having a beautiful countenance and the other not. It says that Leah was of delicate eyes. That is understood as being eyes that were not bright, depressed, sad; but both women were unique. The emphasis in the text is that there was a distinction

between each. They were not the same. God has created us all in a special and unique way. The Bible is intentional in distinction. Different physical bodies and different personalities. That is something you can celebrate. No other is like you; God made you from a mold that is only yours, because that was his will.

**II. The physical appearance of women doesn't change God's plans** - Although Leah ended up married to Jacob by her father's trap, she was still a woman used by God to be the mother of the twelve tribes of Israel. God used the one who was supposedly more delicate or "less favored" to establish the home of the patriarch and his children. Her heart is revealed by the names that her children bore. Her first son was named Ruben, which means, "Jehovah has looked at my affliction and now my husband will love me." Her son Simeon means, "Jehovah has heard that I am belittled," then had Levi, which means, "Now my husband will join me." Can you feel her love for God, but also her despair at her situation? In all this, the Lord was working inside this servant. And then she gave birth to another child, and this changed her focus. Leah decided to call him Judah, which literally means "I will praise Jehovah." The names of their first children show us a Leah looking for the favor of man, but after Judah, we see a woman dedicated to seeking the favor of God. This is a great lesson. Fulfilling God's purpose for our lives is greater satisfaction than getting the attention of any man.

Do you think God had a plan for Leah's life? With everything and her "delicate eyes," she would fulfill God's plan for her life and that of many. In the same way, we see in John 9:2-3 that Jesus healed a man born blind so that the works of God would be manifested through him. Any weakness or physical imperfection must be delivered before the throne of God's grace so that you may receive mercy and the appropriate help from above (Hebrews 4:16). The important thing was not Leah's physical appearance, but in the midst of her weakness, she was used by God for his Purposes.

**III. More beauty doesn't mean fewer problems** - The Bible warns that beauty is vain and misleading (Proverbs 31:30). Beauty can make us believe that our lives will be happier and better. However, in Rachel that premise falls and we see that it isn't true. Rachel was described as beautiful, but she also had her struggles and problems. She struggled with infertility, her husband admonished her strongly at times, and she had a short life. Although it appeared that she had "won" the beauty contest with her sister, she still felt jealous of her and suffered anxiously. Beauty didn't mean that she had good self-esteem. If you don't believe me, you can see in any magazine or internet article the difficult life that celebrities and famous models lead. Neither all their beauty nor their money frees them from rejection, disappointment, pain and low self-esteem. Be happy in Jesus, because the cheerful heart beautifies the face (Proverbs 15:13).

**Conclusion:** The reality is that Leah didn't have a curse from God to ruin her life. Instead, God created her with everything and "delicate eyes" to fulfill his purposes. The Lord has created you also with all the possibilities and limitations you have. This isn't a competition; when you surrender to the Lord, you are always the most beautiful, both inside and out.

**Reflection:** If God ignores our limitations, why do we have to pay so much attention to ourselves? Is there anything, physical, emotional or spiritual that prevents you from living the life that God has for you? What do you think about beauty?

**Keyword: Esthetic**

The interrelation between man and nature, reflected in the aesthetic experience, is one more argument in favor of the existence of a Supreme Being, as revealed in the Bible (Psalm 96: 5-6). To understand and appreciate the world of aesthetics in its fullness we must seek the One who is the Source of all beauty, and be in communion with Jesus Christ, in whom we find total beauty.

Taylor, 1984.

**Women's Bible Study:** 2020 Discipleship Resource Folder  
**Subject:** Prayer, Faith  
**Scripture:** Various  
**Theme:** Anything is possible!  
**Purpose:** Growth in faith and a life of bold prayer before the Lord.



## Women of Prayer

The women of prayer in the Bible inspire us greatly. As we read their stories of faith and God's faithfulness, we fill ourselves with hope in the godness of the One who hears our every word. We can identify with the struggles these women went through, and we are grateful for the supernatural grace that the Lord manifested in His responses. All these women encourage us to follow Christ with bold and firm faith, because in his time, the Lord will answer our requests.

### **Proposition: An effective prayer life helps us grow in faith.**

- I. **Elisabeth, mother of John the Baptist** - She bore the shame of infertility. In her culture, this was as if she had hidden sins! Can you imagine the injustice of her situation? However, she and her husband were faithful people, always at the service of the Lord. Because of their faithfulness to God, they saw his favor and blessing. When it seemed impossible because they were very old, they conceived a child. Elisabeth gave birth to the prophesied son, a special human being who would be the forerunner preparing the way of the Savior Messiah.

Luke 1:24-25 *"After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in seclusion. 'The Lord has done this for me,' she said. 'In these days he has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people.'"*

Do you know how Elisabeth felt? Her shame was such that when she got pregnant, she hid, overwhelmed by what God had done for her. She didn't need to show herself, she didn't need the approval of others; for her to know that God was with her was enough.

Have you been treated unfairly by those who claim to know you in your environment? God lifts your life, listens to you and defends you. Seek recognition from God and not from others, for God will show His favor to you in front of everyone.

- II. **Anna, the prophetess** - This servant waited on the Lord for many years. Since her youth, Anna had devoted herself to prayer and continuous fasting. What a great testimony!

Her prayers were not in vain. One day, Anna arrived at the temple in Jerusalem and there, next to Simeon, was one of the first people to recognize the Messiah, God incarnate, in the person of a child. Luke 2:36-38 says: *“There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.”*

What a wonderful old lady! At her age, her service to God didn't cease, she didn't retract her feet from the temple, but let herself be used and guided by the Holy Spirit. Although we don't have the details of Anna's prayer, we can think that being in the presence of the Lord was a priority on her list. Would you get tired of making your request for so many years? Perhaps you and I would have gotten tired, and we are not as old as Anna was. She is an example of persistence, perseverance and faithfulness in prayer.

- III. The Canaanite Woman** - I don't know her name, but I know her faith has marked my life. She had insistent faith and was not overcome by criticism or obstacles on the road. Despite not being Jewish, she recognized God as the Source of all blessing and power, and prostrated herself before Jesus, arguing her case. This woman was oppressed and marginalized, oppressed for being a foreigner and marginalized for being a woman. However, when she met the king of justice, her whole life was transformed.

Her story is in Matthew 15:21-28

*Leaving that place, Jesus withdrew to the region of Tyre and Sidon. A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to him, crying out, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter is demon-possessed and suffering terribly.” Jesus did not answer a word. So his disciples came to him and urged him, “Send her away, for she keeps crying out after us.” He answered, “**I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel.**” The woman came and knelt before him. “Lord, help me!” she said. He replied, “**It is not right to take the children’s bread and toss it to the dogs.**” “Yes it is, Lord,” she said. “**Even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their master’s table.**” Then Jesus said to her, “**Woman, you have great faith! Your request is granted.**” And her daughter was healed at that moment.*

With a simple prayer full of faith: Lord help me! The Canaanite woman prostrated herself before the Master; her faith was that God would listen and do the work of freeing his daughter tormented by the oppression of Satan. And she didn't accept a no, not even from the Lord himself. She kept asking and explaining her cause.

**Conclusion:** In Christ, everything is possible! Never think that your problem or situation is too difficult or impossible for the Lord. Persist in faith, be bold in prayer, and continue to serve God with the same or greater love. The Bible shows us that this is the role model. Today we are challenged to believe in the Christ who loves us and gave his life for us. I want you to know that he continues to intercede for you from his throne and continues to make the impossible, possible.

**Reflection:**

What acts define your prayer life?  
Are you one of those who surrenders to the first obstacle  
or persist until the end in your prayer life?  
Share testimonies of answered prayers.

**Keyword: Prayer**

God is the loving Father who hears the cry of his children,  
and always takes the initiative on their behalf.

Jesus scrutinized his followers when he instructed them in prayer.  
He insisted that they pray with sincerity and transparency before God,  
even in secret, always free of bitterness and a critical attitude.

Prayer is a call from person to Person, and is the main mode of access  
to the Divine Person and power.

Taylor, 1984.

# Icebreaker

This is a tool that gives the group of women the opportunity to relax, laugh and share experiences and interests. You can use it to encourage conversation, break the ice with new guests, create a fun and entertaining space while creating connections with each other in a memorable environment.

How do you spend your day says a lot about who you are?

We may not have the opportunity to spend a full day with all the guests in the Women's group, but this game can serve as a useful tool to get a glimpse of a typical day in the life of each of the participants. While they share information, there will also be new discoveries about each of your new friends. They can share food tastes, favorite recipes, TV shows that they don't want to miss, as well as what bothers them and what they like. The reality is that we hope that our relationships of friendship and sisterhood become stronger and more united as they share their lives with each other.

## **GAME: A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...**

GROUP SIZE: 5 or more (may vary)

TIME: 10 – 15 minutes for a small group and 20 minutes for a large group

MATERIALS:

- One copy of the "One day in the life of..." card per person
- One pencil or pen per person
- Optional: An envelope or basket to place the cards

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Print the necessary copies of the cards in advance (4 cards per sheet of paper).
- During the activity, distribute the cards to each person.
- Explain to each woman that she needs to talk about her typical day ... normal day of her life.
- Allow them to complete the information in 4 or 5 minutes.
- **Option 1** (recommended): Collect the cards, mix them up and place them in an envelope or basket. Then take them out at random and read the answers.
- Give the group time to try to figure out who is being talked about.
- **Option 2:** Allows each person to read their own card aloud to the group. This option is more suitable for groups that don't know each other well. It is also a good option if you are short on time.
- **Option 3** (for large groups): Collect the cards and save them. Place them in an envelope or basket. Then each person draws a card at random, without showing it to others. If

she takes her own, she returns it and takes another. Once everyone has a card, they are to mingle and interact, asking each other questions freely around the room. Give them time to walk around and approach each other, asking questions to see if that person is on their card.

- The cards can also be used to have the names of the women in the group.
- Finally celebrate their similarities and differences.



## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF...

*Tell us about yourself*



The first thing I do in the morning: \_\_\_\_\_

My breakfast consists of: \_\_\_\_\_

If I have 30 minutes alone, I: \_\_\_\_\_

The clothes I like to wear are: \_\_\_\_\_

My favorite lunch spot is: \_\_\_\_\_

When I watch television, I like: \_\_\_\_\_