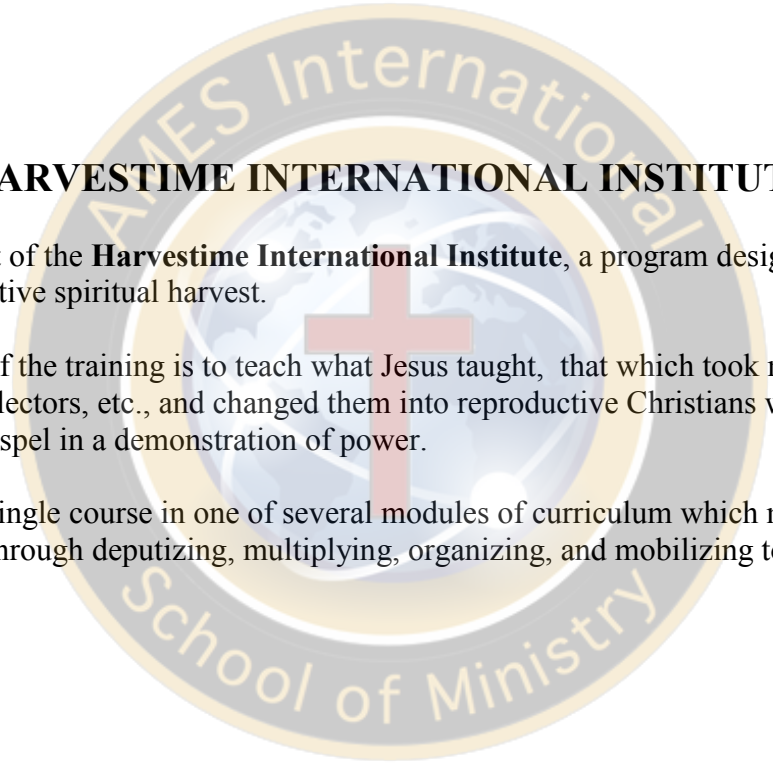
Women:
A Biblical Profile



HARVESTIME INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE

This course is part of the **Harvestime International Institute**, a program designed to equip believers for effective spiritual harvest.

The basic theme of the training is to teach what Jesus taught, that which took men who were fishermen, tax collectors, etc., and changed them into reproductive Christians who reached their world with the Gospel in a demonstration of power.

This manual is a single course in one of several modules of curriculum which moves believers from visualizing through deputizing, multiplying, organizing, and mobilizing to achieve the goal of evangelizing.

© Harvestime International Institute

TABLE OF CONTENTS

How To Use This Manual 2
Suggestions For Group Study 3
Course Introduction 4
Course Objectives 5

1. In The Beginning 6
2. The Fall Of Woman 14
3. Strange And Virtuous Women 26
4. The Book Of Ruth. 39
5. The Book Of Esther 52
6. The Relationship Of Jesus To Women 61
7. The Ministry Of Jesus To Women 69
8. Women In The Book Of Acts 79
9. Women In The Epistles: Specific Ministries 86
10. Women In The Epistles: Position In The Church 92
11. Women In The Epistles: Specialized Instructions 102
12. Your Place In Ministry 115
13. Challenges And Distinctions 131
14. Ministry To Women 141
15. All The Women Of The Bible 154

Answers To Self-Tests 168

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL

MANUAL FORMAT

Each lesson consists of:

Objectives: These are the goals you should achieve by studying the chapter. Read them before starting the lesson.

Key Verse: This verse emphasizes the main concept of the chapter. Memorize it.

Chapter Content: Study each section. Use your Bible to look up any references not printed in the manual.

Self-Test: Take this test after you finish studying the chapter. Try to answer the questions without using your Bible or this manual. When you have concluded the Self-Test, check your answers in the answer section provided at the end of the book.

For Further Study: This section will help you continue your study of the Word of God, improve your study skills, and apply what you have learned to your life and ministry.

Final Examination: If you are enrolled in this course for credit, you received a final examination along with this course. Upon conclusion of this course, you should complete this examination and return it for grading as instructed by your teacher.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED

You will need a King James version of the Bible.

SUGGESTIONS FOR GROUP STUDY

FIRST MEETING

Opening: Open with prayer and introductions. Get acquainted and register the students.

Establish Group Procedures: Determine who will lead the meetings, the time, place, and dates for the sessions.

Praise And Worship: Invite the presence of the Holy Spirit into your training session.

Distribute Manuals To Students: Introduce the manual title, format, and course objectives provided in the first few pages of the manual.

Make The First Assignment: Students will read the chapters assigned and take the Self-Tests prior to the next meeting. The number of chapters you cover per meeting will depend on chapter length, content, and the abilities of your group.

SECOND AND FOLLOWING MEETINGS

Opening: Pray. Welcome and register any new students and give them a manual. Take attendance. Have a time of praise and worship.

Review: Present a brief summary of what you studied at the last meeting.

Lesson: Discuss each section of the chapter using the **HEADINGS IN CAPITAL BOLD FACED LETTERS** as a teaching outline. Ask students for questions or comments on what they have studied. Apply the lesson to the lives and ministries of your students.

Self-Test: Review the Self-Tests students have completed. (Note: If you do not want the students to have access to the answers to the Self-Tests, you may remove the answer pages from the back of each manual.)

For Further Study: You may do these projects on a group or individual basis.

Final Examination: If your group is enrolled in this course for credit, you received a final examination with this course. Reproduce a copy for each student and administer the exam upon conclusion of this course.

Module: Specialization
Course: Women: A Biblical Profile

INTRODUCTION

There are many voices in the world today speaking on behalf of women.

-We have heard the voice of what has been termed in some nations "women's liberation" calling for equal rights for all women everywhere.

-In other nations, the voice of tradition has been raised demanding that women be kept in subjection.

-Theologians have debated extensively regarding the role of women in the Church.

-We have heard the voices of psychologists, educators, and philosophers with their various views on womanhood.

In general, concern with the subject of women has focused on their purpose and position in society. Many modern movements promoting liberation for women have overreacted to the problems and concerns faced by women.

The movement towards liberation for women is not new. It can be traced back to the first woman, Eve, who sought liberation from God's rules. But true liberation for women comes only through Jesus Christ and recognition of the patterns and principles governing womanhood revealed in God's Word, the Bible.

This course summarizes all the Bible teaches regarding women. It is not only a study guide, but a reference tool as it lists all the passages about women and references to all the individual women mentioned in the Word of God.

Now, "Let the earth hear His voice" on the subject of womanhood as we develop from Scripture: "Women: A Biblical Profile."

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course you will be able to:

- Summarize the history of women as revealed in the Bible.
- List the purposes for which women were created.
- Contrast the traits of the two classes of women described in Proverbs.
- Explain the role of women during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ.
- Summarize the Biblical position of women as revealed in Acts and the Epistles.
- Document with Scripture the ministry opportunities open to Christian women.
- Summarize the book of Ruth.
- Summarize the book of Esther.
- Continue independent study of women from a Scriptural perspective.
- Communicate what you have learned to other women.
- Start a ministry to women.

CHAPTER ONE

IN THE BEGINNING

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Provide Scriptural references on the origin of woman.
- Summarize the divine creation of woman.
- Describe her Biblical relationships to God and man.
- Identify the original purposes for which man and woman were created.

KEY VERSE:

> **So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. (Genesis 1:27)**

INTRODUCTION

The book of Genesis in the Holy Bible is referred to as the book of beginnings. It records the beginning of the world, of man and woman, of sin and God's plan for salvation, and the formation of the nations.

The first chapter of Genesis describes the creation of the world. The second chapter tells of the creation of man with a reference to woman in 1:27. The main references describing the origin of woman are Genesis chapter 2:

> **And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.**
>
> **And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and he slept; and He took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh instead thereof;**
>
> **And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man.**
>
> **And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.**

Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh. (Genesis 2:18, 21-24)

The Bible reveals that woman was:

CREATED BY GOD:

Genesis 2:7 states that man was created by God from the dust of the earth. God breathed into man the breath of life, and he became a living soul. God decided it was not good for Adam to be alone (Genesis 2:22). God caused a deep sleep to fall on Adam, then He took one of his ribs and from it created the first woman who was named Eve.

Adam called his mate woman, which means "she-man" or "joined to man," because she was taken out of man. This is where the word "woman" originated.

CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD:

Genesis 2:26-27 documents that God created both male and female in His image:

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. (Genesis 1:26-27)

MAN'S FIRST RESPONSIBILITY

Adam and Eve were told by God to:

-Be fruitful.
-Multiply.
-Replenish the earth.
-Subdue the earth.
-Have dominion over every living thing on earth. (Genesis 1:28)

It is interesting to note that God's first command to man and woman was to "be fruitful." The Harvestime International Institute, of which this unit is a specialized course, follows the theme of spiritual harvesting, or fruitfulness, in its curriculum. Spiritual fruitfulness is a Biblical concept traced from this initial command to the final harvest among the nations prophesied in the closing book of Revelation.

Adam and Eve were to be fruitful in each area of their triune nature, physically, spiritually, and mentally as they replenished the earth, subdued and took dominion over it.

WOMAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO GOD

Woman was created by God, in the image of God, with an eternal soul (Genesis 2:7) related to God in a special union. This relationship is spiritual because God is a spirit (John 4:24). God enjoyed a spiritual relationship with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:8). This union was broken due to man's fall into sin, but God provided a plan to restore man's spiritual relationship with his Creator. You will learn more about this in the next chapter.

WOMAN'S RELATIONSHIP TO MAN

The relationship of woman to man was one of:

LOVE:

Although this is not a study of the subject of Biblical types, a word on this subject needs to be presented in order to understand the original relationship of woman and man. When we speak of a Biblical type, we are referring to the fact that some incidents recorded in Scripture are not only important in themselves, but are examples of even greater spiritual truths.

Many people and incidents of the Old Testament are "types" of spiritual truths revealed in the New Testament. The study of types is one form of Bible study which Harvestime International Institute teaches in the course entitled "Creative Bible Study Methods."

The creation of woman from man is an example of the type of relationship that would later exist between Jesus Christ and the Church. While Adam slept, his side was opened and woman was created. Centuries later when Jesus Christ hung on the cross for the sins of all mankind, through the great sleep of His death the Church was created. Christ's side was pierced with a spear and there came forth a creative flow of blood to redeem and water to purify the Church:

> **...Even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it;**
>
> **That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word. (Ephesians 5:25-26)**

The creation of woman speaks of a love relationship, similar to that which exists between Christ and the Church. This is a deep, enduring, spiritual love, not a sensual relationship based on external charm or beauty.

COMPANIONSHIP:

God said it was not good for man to be alone. He intended for man and woman to be companions.

HELPFULNESS:

God said He would create a "help meet" for man (Genesis 2:18). The same Hebrew word for help meet, Azyer, occurs forty times in the Old Testament and is often used to speak of God as helper of His people. The word does not mean subjection, as God is certainly not subject to man. Rather, it pictures a giving, loving, caring, relationship of help similar to that which exists between God and man.

COMMITMENT:

Genesis 2:24 speaks of the relationship of commitment between man and woman. The man is to:

Leave his father and mother:	Mental commitment.
Cleave unto his wife:	Emotional commitment.
They shall be one flesh:	Physical commitment.

Love, companionship, commitment, and a mutual helping relationship are qualities of the union God designed between man and woman.

SELF-TEST

1. List the main Biblical references describing the creation of woman.

_____

_____

_____

2. Check the item on the list below which is NOT one of the original purposes given to man and woman by God.

_____Multiply
_____Be fruitful
_____Subdue the earth
_____Organize cities and communities
_____Have dominion over all living things
_____Replenish the earth

3. Check the one correct answer. The relationship between women and God is:

_____Physical only, as we are made in His image.
_____Not only physical but also a spiritual relationship.
_____Not possible, due to the fall of man into sin.

4. List the four main relationships that should exist between man and woman. Provide the proper Bible reference for each relationship.

Relationship Reference

(1)_____

2)_____

(3)_____

(4)_____

5. Check the correct statement regarding the word "help meet" as it is used of woman in relationship to man in Genesis 2. Help meet...

_____ Means woman is to be like a servant to man.

_____ Means the same as God being a help meet to His people.

_____Is not a scriptural term for the relationship of man and woman.

6. Write the Key Verse from memory:

_____

_____

_____

_____

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Expand your knowledge about the beginning. Study each Bible reference and summarize what it teaches about creation as illustrated by the example.

Reference	Summary
Exodus 20:11	God created the world in six days, rested the seventh and called this day the Sabbath.
Nehemiah 9:6	
Job 12:9	
Job 26:7	
Job 38:4-7	
Psalm 24:2	
Psalm 33:6	
Psalm 95:5	
Psalm 102:25	
Psalm 104:5	
Isaiah 40:28	
Isaiah 45:12	

Isaiah 48:13

Acts 4:24

Acts 7:50

Acts 14:15

Hebrews 11:3

CHAPTER TWO

THE FALL OF WOMAN

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Describe the initial fall of woman into sin.
- List the penalties of sin.
- Identify the Bible reference which gives the first promise of a Savior.
- Recognize the cycle of temptation and sin.

KEY VERSE:

> **And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.**
> **(Genesis 3:15)**

INTRODUCTION

Genesis 3 is perhaps the most tragic chapter in the entire Bible, yet at the same time the most wonderful. Before proceeding with this lesson read Genesis 3 in your Bible.

THE TEMPTATION

Satan enters the scene in Genesis chapter 3 as a serpent, which is another name for him (see Revelation 12:9). He actually appeared in the shape and form of a serpent or snake. To fully understand Eve's temptation, we must note God's initial instructions to man:

> **And the Lord God commanded the man saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat;**
>
> **But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shall not eat of it;**
>
> **for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.**
> **(Genesis 2:16-17)**

The first step in Eve's fall into sin was being in the wrong place. In Genesis 3 we find her near the forbidden tree. Proverbs states of the path of wickedness:

Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away. (Proverbs 4:15)

Second, Eve should never have entered into conversation with Satan whose first words questioned the instructions given by God:

And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (Genesis 3:1)

Questioning the truth of the Word of God is often how Satan starts the temptation process. In answering Satan, Eve misquoted God's Word. She added to God's instructions as well as minimizing the penalty for sin:

But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. (Genesis 3:3)

Compare this verse with Genesis 2:16-17. God did not say "neither shall ye touch it." This is added by Eve. Right from the beginning, man started adding his ideas, instructions, and legalism to the Word of God. God also said "thou shalt surely die." This was the penalty for eating of the tree. Eve changed this to "lest ye die," meaning "you might die."

Today, there is the same tendency to minimize the penalty for sin. People say, "Surely a righteous God could not send anyone to Hell!" Actually, God does not send anyone to Hell. Man chooses to go there by his own sinful actions. The penalty for sin remains everlasting separation from the presence of God in Hell. People often do not identify sin for what it is. Abortion is called a method of "birth control" instead of murder. Adulterous relationships are sometimes referred to as "affairs."

In answering Eve, Satan contradicted God's Word:

And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die;

For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:4-5)

On the following chart, note the misuse of God's Word in the first temptation:

First: Questioned
Genesis 3:1
"Hath God said?"

Second: Added to
Genesis 3:3
"Neither shall ye touch"

Third: Penalty for sin minimized
Genesis 3:3
"lest" ye die instead of "ye shall surely die"

Fourth: Contradicted
Genesis 3:4
"ye shall not surely die"

It is important to recognize this pattern, for it is one Satan still uses when he tempts you to sin. He accuses the Word of God and tries to cause discontentment. Eve was holy before God in the beautiful environment of the garden, yet Satan made her discontent. He made her believe she could become like a god and know everything. Discontent leads to sin. For example, unhappiness with financial situations causes men to rob, steal, and cheat. Discontent with marriage leads to adulterous relationships.

Satan wanted to alienate (separate) Eve from God. Satan claimed God knew she would receive great benefits from eating of this tree. She would be more knowledgeable and become like a god. In essence he was saying, "God must not think much of you, Eve, to deny you this wonderful opportunity." Eve should have answered, "I am already like God," because she was created in God's image.

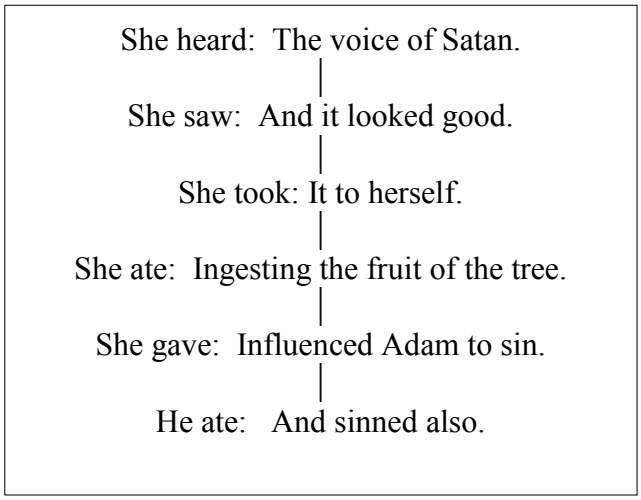
Always remember: Sin usually comes disguised as opportunity.

THE FALL

Genesis 3:6 describes the darkest moment in human history:

> **And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. (Genesis 3:6)**

Note the progression into sin:



It is important to note this pattern, as it is the same pattern followed by people today as they fall into sin. First, Eve was in the wrong place. She put herself in a place where she was likely to be tempted. Then she listened to the enemy, Satan.

Next she looked longingly upon that which God had forbidden. Temptation here was still at a distance, but then Eve proceeded to take and eat from the tree. She partook of that which God had labeled SIN.

The final result was that her sin affected Adam when she gave the fruit to him and he ate. When you sin, it usually affects those around you and when they sin, they enter the same destructive cycle of sin.

Psalms warns of a similar progression:

> **Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.**
>
> **But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. (Psalms 1:1-2)**

First you walk in the temptation of sin. If you do not flee, you will soon be standing (pausing) to think about it. Finally, you will be sitting in the seat of the scornful or settling down in the place of sin.

Look at the following diagram. No matter where you are in the cycle of temptation and sin, the cycle can be broken through the power of Jesus Christ who paid the penalty for the sin of all mankind.

The Cycle Of Sin

-Walking in the place of temptation 

-Enticing others to sin 

-Hearing Satan's voice 

-Partaking: Entering into the sin 

-Seeing the forbidden sin, admiring it 

-Taking (accepting) the temptation to sin.

The cycle of sin can be broken at any point through the power of the cross of Jesus Christ. On the cross, Jesus paid the penalty for sin. He bruised the head or power of Satan so you can be delivered from both the power and penalty of sin.

If the cycle is not broken in your life, then you will influence others around you. You will entice them to sin and the cycle will continue in their lives. Thus, it becomes a continuous chain spreading throughout the world. The cycle can only be broken by the power of the Gospel message of the death of Jesus for sin and His resurrection power over death, Hell, and Satan.

There are only two cycles in the world today in which men exist. One is the cycle of sin. The other is the cycle of salvation: Hearing the Gospel, understanding it, accepting it as truth, partaking of the plan of salvation, and leading others to Jesus Christ.

In which cycle do you want to spend your life?

IMMEDIATE RESULTS OF THE FALL

There were several immediate results of the fall into sin:

KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL:

Immediately after the fall, Adam and Eve were no longer in a state of innocence. They recognized the difference between good and evil and realized they were naked (Genesis 3:7).

SELF-RIGHTEOUSNESS:

Adam and Eve tried to make clothing from fig leaves which is a type (an outward example) of what man tries to do spiritually. Realizing we are sinners, we try to better ourselves. We think

self-improvement will correct our sin (Genesis 3:7), but our self-righteousness is as inadequate as the fig leaves were to cover Adam and Eve:

> **But we are all as an unclean thing and all our righteousness are as filthy rags. (Isaiah 64:6)**

FEAR AND SHAME:

When God came to walk and talk with Adam and Eve, they hid themselves in shame and fear (Genesis 3:10). Shame over the past and fear of the future are the basic emotions which generate all other negative emotional responses.

SEPARATION FROM GOD:

God did not remove Himself from man's presence, rather, it was man that removed himself from God. Adam and Eve tried to hide from God. There is another important pattern here. Look at the following chart and note that Adam and Eve:

Doubted God
"Yea, hath God said"
Genesis 3:1

Disobeyed God
"She took ..and did eat..."
Genesis 3:6

Denied God
"Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord."
Genesis 3:8

The knowledge of good and evil, self-righteousness, fear, shame, and separation from God were the immediate results of the fall of man. Other results came with the penalty for sin.

THE MEETING WITH GOD

A special meeting with God followed the fall. God, Adam, and Eve all participated in the conversation:

God..."Where Art Thou?" God's question was not to discover where Adam and Eve were hiding. God is all knowledgeable, and He knew where they were. The reason for His question was to focus attention on their spiritual condition. "Where art thou, Adam? Where are you spiritually? What has happened?"

God confronts sinful mankind with the same question today. We must recognize our true spiritual condition because without Christ we stand condemned before a holy God.

Adam... Adam answered that he heard God's voice and was afraid because he was naked so he hid himself from God's presence.

God... God's next response was also a question:

> **Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? (Genesis 3:11)**

God already knew Adam had eaten of the tree. His purpose in questioning was to get Adam to confess his sin:

> **If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sin and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (I John 1:9)**

Adam... His answer demonstrated an inability to accept blame. In blaming Eve, he also blamed God:

> **The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. (Genesis 3:12)**

God... Then God asked the woman,"What is this that thou hast done?"

Eve... Following the pattern set by her husband, Eve also refused to accept blame. She blamed the serpent for her sin.

God... The rest of the conversation was dominated by God who pronounced the penalties for sin.

PENALTIES FOR SIN

We previously noted some of the immediate results of sin. Now there are additional penalties as God pronounces judgment on the serpent, man, and woman.

ON THE SERPENT:

l. Changed physical form: The physical form Satan used for the temptation was cursed.

The serpent, or snake, originally walked upright but from this time on wiggled on his belly through the dust.

2. Enmity between Satan and man: This was the beginning of what we call "spiritual warfare," with Satan struggling for the soul of man. This warfare continues to the present day. Harvestime International Institute offers a course entitled "Spiritual Strategies" which focuses on this spiritual warfare and provides strategies for victory over the enemy.

3. A crushed head: The third penalty on the serpent is actually a promise to sinful man. Although Satan would "bruise the heel" of man spiritually through sin, the seed (descendant) that would come from woman would crush the head of Satan (Genesis 3:15). This was the first promise of a Savior for the sin of mankind. Although Satan would affect man through sin, a Savior would be sent by God through woman and the power of sin would be crushed. The tragedy of sin came through the fall of one woman, but redemption would also come through a woman who would birth the Lord Jesus Christ.

ON ADAM:

1. Labor a weariness: Prior to sin Adam tended the ground in happiness, but now he must labor hard. The environment of the earth changed. The ground that was once fertile and without pests or weeds became filled with thorns and thistles.

2. Death: The penalty of natural death was imposed on Adam. God said his body would return to the ground, for "dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Spiritual death was also a penalty of sin. God said "the soul that sinneth, it shall die" (Ezekiel 18:20). Without forgiveness, man would die the spiritual death of eternal separation from God.

ON EVE:

The woman also received penalties for her sin:

1. Sorrow in childbirth: The curse of pain and sorrow was placed upon child bearing.
2. Subjection: Eve would become subject to her husband. (We will deal more with the concept of submission later in this course as we study the Epistles).

PENALTIES ON BOTH ADAM AND EVE:

God removed Adam and Eve from the beautiful environment of the Garden of Eden to a world filled with sorrow, pain, thorns, and death.

THE PROMISE OF CHRIST

The only bright spot in the entire chapter of Genesis 3 is the promise of the coming Redeemer who would crush the power of Satan (Genesis 3:15).

Note how this was fulfilled in Jesus Christ:

Sin Brought...	**Fulfilled In Jesus...**
Travail	Jesus entered into travail for us. (Isaiah 53:11)
Subjection	He was made subject to the law that He might redeem us from the law. (Galatians 4:4)
Thorns	He was crowned with thorns for us. (Matthew 27:29)
Sweat	Jesus sweat great drops of blood for us. (Luke 22:44)
Sorrow	Surely, He bore our sorrows. (Isaiah 53:4-5)
Death	He brought eternal life. (John 3:16)

Jesus bore every penalty for sin. Through His life, death, and resurrection, the head (power) of Satan was crushed.

THE BEGINNING AND THE END

In these first two chapters we have studied events which occurred when the first woman was created. The book of Revelation provides interesting contrasts between the beginning and end. Read Revelation chapters 21 and 22 which describe the final days of time and the new heaven and earth God has planned for His people. On the following chart, observe the contrasts where every penalty resulting from sin is eliminated:

Genesis	Revelation
Paradise closed 3:23	Paradise Opened 21:25
Dispossession through sin 3:24	Repossession through grace 21:24
Curse imposed 3:17	Curse removed 22:3
Access to tree denied 3:24	Access permitted 22:14
Beginning of sorrow, death 3:16-19	Ending of sorrow, death 21:4
Garden defiled 3:5-7	No defilement 21:27
Man's dominion broken 3:19	Dominion restored 22:5
Evil triumphs 3:13	Good triumphs 20:10
Walk of God with man interrupted 3:8-10	Relationship resumed 21:3

Although the fall into sin was a sad moment in history, the future for all mankind is one of joyful anticipation through Jesus Christ.

SELF-TEST

1. Which Bible reference is the first promise of a Savior given in Scripture?

_____

2. Write the Key Verse from memory.

_____

_____

3. Write T in front of each statement that is TRUE. Write F in front of each statement that is FALSE

   a._____Eve misquoted God's Word when she answered Satan.
   b._____Adam blamed the serpent for his sin.
   c._____Eve blamed Adam for her sin.
   d._____Eve tried to minimize the penalty God warned would result from sin.
   e._____The cycle of temptation can be broken at any point through the power of Jesus Christ.

4. Read each of the penalties for sin listed below. In the space provided before each penalty, write:

   S-If it is a penalty on the serpent.
   M-If it is a penalty on man.
   W-If it is a penalty on woman.
   MW-If it is a penalty on both man and woman.

   a._____Spiritual death.
   b._____Knowledge of good and evil.
   c._____Fear and shame.
   d._____It shall bruise thy head.
   e._____Labor a weariness.
   f._____Sorrow in childbirth.

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Continue your study of contrasts between the beginning and the end of the world by using the following chart to study Revelation 20-22.

The Beginning **Genesis 1-3**	**The Ending** **Revelation 20-22**
God creates the Heaven and earth 1:1	A new Heaven and earth 21:1
Let there be light 1:3-5	No need of light 21:23; 22:5
Waters called sea 1:10	No more sea 21:1
No access to the tree of life: 2:8-9	Access to tree of life 22:2
River out of Eden 2:10	River of life 22:1
Death from a tree 2:17	Life from a tree 22:2
Curse instituted 3:17	No more curse 22:3
Pain 3:17	No more pain 21:4
Entrance shut 3:24	Gate not shut 21:25
Alienated from God's presence 3:8	Eternally in God's presence 20:12
Death instituted 2:17	Death banished 20:14
Devil deceives 3:4-6	Devil cannot deceive 20:3
Devil loose to do evil 3:4-6	Devil bound 20:3
Sorrow 3:17	No more sorrow 21:4
Creative power of God 1:1	Destructive power 20:9
It is begun 1:1	It is finished 21:6

CHAPTER THREE

STRANGE AND VIRTUOUS WOMEN

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Identify the two types of women discussed in Proverbs.
- Describe characteristics of the "strange" woman.
- Describe characteristics of the "virtuous" woman.

KEY VERSE:

> **Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. (Proverbs 31:30)**

INTRODUCTION

When woman was first created, she was made by God in a beautiful and sinless state. Due to her fall into sin, all women are now in one of two categories:

> **The woman apart from God:** The sinful woman who has not accepted Jesus Christ as Savior and received forgiveness for her sin.
>
> **The woman of God**: Once a sinner, this woman has confessed her sin and accepted Jesus Christ as Savior. She now stands virtuous (holy) before God.

The book of Proverbs in the Old Testament emphasizes the contrast between these two categories. The woman apart from God is referred to as the "strange" woman. The woman of God is referred to as the "virtuous" woman.

The subject of the strange woman runs like a connecting thread throughout the book of Proverbs until the final chapter where the characteristics of the virtuous woman are presented as a glorious contrast.

THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

The book of Proverbs has been referred to as "vertical wisdom for horizontal living." It is a collection of wise principles given from God to man (vertically) to govern our living (horizontally) with others.

The word "proverbs" means "a brief saying instead of many words." Each passage in Proverbs is a concise summary of an important truth.

Solomon, the son of King David, wrote most of the Proverbs. It is recorded in I Kings 4:32 that Solomon spoke three thousand proverbs under the inspiration of God. Some of these are preserved for us by the Holy Spirit in the book of Proverbs.

Solomon's emphasis on strange and virtuous women developed in part from his own marriage relationships. Solomon sinned by marrying more than one wife and some of his wives were "strange" women who served false gods.

THE STRANGE WOMAN

The word "strange" in the book of Proverbs means "foreign, alien, adulterous." It describes a woman separated from God, a foreigner to His righteousness. Since God's ideal plan for woman is that she be part of His Body, the Church, this makes the strange woman an adulteress from God because she has turned from relationship with God to a sinful life.

Proverbs identifies several characteristics of the "strange" woman. While all of these characteristics may not be evident, any of them can emerge in a sinful woman's life.

INSINCERE:

The strange woman uses flattering speech, giving insincere praise with a wrong motive. Proverbs teaches that such a woman should be avoided:

> **To deliver thee from the strange woman, even from the stranger which flattereth with her words. (Proverbs 2:16)**
>
> **To keep thee from ...the flattery of the tongue of a strange woman. (Proverbs 6:24)**
>
> **That they may keep thee from the strange woman, from the stranger which flattereth with her words. (Proverbs 7:5)**

EVIL:

One of the purposes of Proverbs is to provide principles....

> **To keep thee from the evil woman. (Proverbs 6:24)**

A DESTROYER:

The strange woman seeks to destroy others by drawing them into her sin:

> **For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread; and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. (Proverbs 6:26)**

IMMODEST:

The sinful woman dresses immodestly:

> **And behold, there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot... (Proverbs 7:10)**

SUBTLE:

The strange woman is deceptive and subtitle:

> **And behold, there met him a woman...subtitle of heart. (Proverbs 7:10)**

She is pictured as a deceptive pit which causes others to fall:

> **For a whore is a deep ditch; and a strange woman is a narrow pit. (Proverbs 23:27)**

She speaks deceptive words which entice others to sin:

> **For the lips of a strange woman drop as an honeycomb, and her mouth is smoother than oil. (Proverbs 5:3)**

CONTENTIOUS:

"Contentious" means to be argumentative, always involved in controversy:

> **The contentions of a wife are a continual dropping. (Proverbs 19:13)**
>
> **A continual dropping on a very rainy day and a contentious woman are alike. (Proverbs 27:15)**

It is better to dwell in the wilderness than with a contentious and an angry woman. (Proverbs 21:19)

A BRAWLER:

Two verses speak of the brawling of the strange woman. To "brawl" means to be loud and to fight noisily. Proverbs warns:

It is better to dwell in the housetop than with a brawling woman in a wide house. (Proverbs 21:9)

Even the corner of a housetop is more desirable:

It is better to dwell in the corner of the housetop than with a brawling woman and in a wide house. (Proverbs 25:24)

ADULTEROUS:

The sinful woman may be involved in adulterous physical relationships. For sure, she is an adulterous from God because she has neglected her relationship with Him:

Such is the way of an adulterous woman... (Proverbs 30:20)

And why wilt thou, my son, be ravished with a strange woman, and embrace the bosom of a stranger? (Proverbs 5:20)

SELF-RIGHTEOUS:

The sinful woman does not comprehend her own true spiritual condition:

...She eateth, and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness. (Proverbs 30:20)

ODIOUS:

Proverbs states that the strange woman is "odious" which means "hateful." The writer expresses concern...

For an odious woman when she is married... (Proverbs 30:23)

ANGRY:

It is better to dwell in the wilderness, than with a contentious and an angry woman. (Proverbs 21:19)

UNPROFITABLE:

Two verses reveal a strange woman can cause financial ruin:

> **Take his garment that is surety for a stranger, and take a pledge of him for a strange woman. (Proverbs 27:13 and 20:16)**

FOOLISH AND CLAMOROUS:

To be foolish is to lack wisdom. "Clamorous" means to loudly complain and demand:

> **A foolish woman is clamorous... (Proverbs 9:13)**

UNKNOWLEDGEABLE:

> **A foolish woman is clamorous; she is simple, and knoweth nothing. (Proverbs 9:13)**

WITHOUT DISCRETION:

This means she has no tact. Proverbs compares a beautiful woman without discretion to a jewel in the nose of a pig:

> **As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion. (Proverbs 11:22)**

The book of Proverbs describes the strange woman as a rather unpleasant person. It is better to dwell in the housetop (Proverbs 21:9), in the wilderness (Proverbs 21:19), or in the corner of the housetop (Proverbs 25:24) than to dwell with her.

A SERIES OF CONTRASTS

The book of Proverbs presents a series of contrasts between the virtuous or wise woman and the strange, foolish woman:

Strange (Foolish)	**Virtuous (Wise)**
Destroys her home (14:1)	Builds her home. (14:1)
Clamorous, simple, knows nothing (9:13)	Retains honor (11:16)
Like a jewel in a swine's snout (11:22)	Crown to her husband (12:4)

WOMAN AS WIFE

Proverbs makes several observations regarding the woman's role as a wife. These comments continue to develop the contrast between strange and virtuous women:

> **A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband; but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness to his bones. (Proverbs 12:4)**

Men are warned against adulterous relationships with women:

> **So he that goeth in to his neighbors' wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent. (Proverbs 6:29)**

> **But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding; he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. (Proverbs 6:32)**

A man is to be satisfied with his own wife rather than strange women:

> **Let thy fountain be blessed and rejoice with the wife of thy youth. (Proverbs 5:18)**

A virtuous wife is a gift from the Lord:

> **Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the Lord. (Proverbs 18:22)**

> **...a prudent wife is from the Lord. (Proverbs 19:14)**

A strange wife is contentious and a continuing trial:

> **...the contentions of a wife are a continual dropping. (Proverbs 19:13)**

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN

After describing the strange woman throughout the Proverbs, the writer closes with a glorious contrast of the virtuous woman. The discussion opens with a question and a declaration:

> **Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. (Proverbs 31:10)**

Read Proverbs 31:10-31 which details the characteristics of the virtuous woman. Keep your Bible open to this passage as you review her personality traits.

Remember, just as the sinful woman may not exhibit all of the traits of the strange woman, the

following characteristics may not all be apparent in a Godly woman. They can be attained through spiritual growth, however, and are God's picture of the ideal woman.

The following is a verse-by-verse study of the characteristics of the virtuous woman:

VERSE 10:

The virtuous woman is rare, as the writer questions "Who can find a virtuous woman?" To be virtuous means to be morally good. This kind of woman is awarded eternal value, far above rubies. The Amplified Bible expands this verse to include the characteristics of intelligence and capability.

VERSE 11:

She is trustworthy and the heart of her husband safely trusts in her.

VERSE 12:

Her relationships are right. She wants only good for her husband. The Amplified Bible expands the meaning of "good" to include the concepts of comforting and encouraging her husband.

VERSE 13:

She is industrious and a willing worker.

VERSE 14:

She provides for her household. This verse means spiritual as well as physical provision. The Amplified Bible expands this passage to explain that she provides for the "physical, material, and spiritual needs of her household."

VERSE 15:

She is considerate and responsible. She rises early to make provision for her family. This is also a type of making spiritual provision by rising early to meet with God. The virtuous woman is a good supervisor and she provides for those who work for her.

VERSE 16:

She is businesslike. She considers, plans, and thinks before she acts. She is aggressive and productive in the "vineyard" or work God has given her to do. The Amplified Bible indicates she doesn't neglect her present duties by assuming others. She expands prudently (wisely).

VERSE 17:

The virtuous woman is strong. The Amplified Version states she develops "spiritual, mental, and physical fitness for her God given task."

VERSE 18:

She has a good self image and is not affected by outward circumstances. According to the Amplified Bible, her light of encouragement burns in the night of trouble and sorrow, warding off fear, doubt, and distrust.

VERSE 19:

She is skillful and trained for her work. She knows how to use the "tools of her trade," so to speak.

VERSE 20:

The virtuous woman is generous to the poor and reaches out to minister to the needy. The Amplified Bible says she "ministers to the body, mind, and spirit of others."

VERSE 21:

The virtuous woman is fearless. She clothes her family, not only physically but spiritually. Hebrews 9:19-21 speaks of the spiritual covering of the blood of Jesus Christ.

VERSE 22:

This passage describes the virtuous woman as a creative homemaker as well as being properly dressed.

VERSE 23:

She is supportive of her husband's position.

VERSE 24:

She is a good business woman.

VERSE 25:

She is strong, honorable, and joyfully looks to the future.

VERSE 26:

She is wise and ministers through the spoken word. She controls her tongue and is kind.

VERSE 27:

She is conscientious (responsible) and looks well to the ways of her household. She is not idle, but is active and energetic. The Amplified Bible states she "does not eat the bread of idle gossip, discontent, and self-pity."

VERSE 28:

The virtuous woman is an ideal wife and mother.

VERSE 29:

She "excels in virtue." The spirit of excellence is apparent in her life and ministry.

VERSE 30:

She is successful and others recognize it. She also fears God.

VERSE 31:

She will be fruitful (productive) and others will honor her for her contributions. Her own works praise her. She does not have to boast.

THE SECRET OF THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN

What is the secret of the virtuous woman? How can she achieve all of these positive traits?

She fears the Lord! All of her righteousness, all of her wonderful positive character traits spring from her right relationship with God.

Fearing God involves more than respecting Him. It includes acknowledging Him as God, recognizing and confessing your sin, and accepting Jesus Christ as personal Savior. As you become a new creature in Jesus Christ, all the old things are done away with:

> **Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (II Corinthians 5:17)**

The virtuous woman was once affected by the sin which came upon all men and women through Eve's original sin. The difference between her and the sinful woman is that she is no longer sinful. She has been cleansed by the saving power of Christ.

Your life may be ruined by sin. You may have many of the characteristics of the sinful woman evident in your life. Right now, through Christ, you can be transformed from a sinful to a virtuous woman. You can restore your relationship with God and then let Him develop these beautiful, virtuous characteristics in your life.

All you have to do is confess your sins and accept Jesus Christ as your Savior. If you have not already made this commitment, pray to God in your own words and do this right now.

SUMMARY

One verse provides a concise summary of what Proverbs teaches on the subject of women. It is the final contrast between the strange and the virtuous woman:

> **Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. (Proverbs 31:30)**

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory.

_____

_____

2. What does the word "proverbs" mean?

_____

3. What does the word "strange" mean as it is used in the book of Proverbs?

_____

4. What does the word "virtuous" mean as it is used in the book of Proverbs?

_____

_____

5. Read each character trait listed below. If it is a character trait of the strange woman, write the letter S in the blank before the characteristic. If it describes the virtuous woman, write the letter V on the blank before the trait.

a.___ Insincere
b.___ Evil
c.___ Subtle in heart
d.___ Contentious (argumentative)
e.___ Crown to her husband
f.___ Jewel in a pig's nose
g.___ Odious (hateful)
h.___ Hard to find
i.____ Without discretion
j.___ Angry
k.___ Foolish
l.____ Industrious
m.___ Skillful
n.___ Self-Righteous
o.___ Brawling
p.___ Trustworthy
q.___ Fears God
r.___ Holy

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. If you made the special commitment to Jesus Christ, asked Him to forgive you of your sin, and accepted Him as your Savior, we would like to know about it. Write us and let us know about your decision.

2. To enable further study of what Proverbs teaches regarding women, each verse on the subject is listed below. Space is provided for you to record a summary of the content of each verse in your own words.

Reference	**Summary**
2:16	
5:3	
5:18	
5:20	
6:24	
6:26	
6:29	
6:32	
7:5	
7:10	
9:13	
11:16	
11:22	
12:4	
14:1	

18:22

19:13

19:14

20:16

21:9

21:19

23:27

25:24

27:13

27:15

30:20

30:23

31:10-31

CHAPTER FOUR

THE BOOK OF RUTH

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verses from memory.
- Summarize the story of Ruth.
- Identify the purposes of the book.
- Explain the relationship of Boaz and Ruth as a type of Jesus and His Church.
- Recognize that God works through circumstances to accomplish His plan and purpose.

KEY VERSES:

> **And Ruth said, intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go; and whither thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also if aught but death part thee and me. (Ruth 1:16-17)**

INTRODUCTION

There are two books in the Bible that are named for women. They are the books of Ruth and Esther. In this chapter we will study the book of Ruth, the Gentile woman who served God among the Jewish people. In the next chapter, we will study about Esther, the Jewish woman who served God among the Gentiles. Before proceeding further with this chapter, read the four chapters of the book of Ruth.

THE NAME

This book is named for Ruth, the Moabite daughter-in-law of Naomi, who was a Jew. Moabites were descendants of Lot and were heathen people. Ruth is one of four women mentioned in Matthew 1 as ancestors of Jesus who were part of the Messianic family line. The other three women are Tamar, Rahab, and Bathsheba.

AUTHOR

The author of this book is not known.

TIME

The time of the events of the book of Ruth is identified in the first verse of the first chapter. The story occurred during the period of the judges of Israel which was a time of trouble in the history of God's people, Israel. There was no king in Israel and the people turned away from God to live as they pleased:

> **In those days there was no king in Israel, but every man did that which was right in his own eyes. (Judges 17:6)**

The book of Judges records this dark period in Israel's history. The people sinned repeatedly, experienced God's judgment, and turned back to God for deliverance. Each time God raised up a judge (a Godly leader) to deliver them.

SETTING

The events of the book take place in two locations:

Moab, where Naomi and her family fled to escape a famine in Israel (chapter 1, verses 1-18).

Bethlehem in Israel, where most of the story occurs (chapter 1:19-22 through chapter 4).

TO WHOM

The book was written for Israel as part of the historical record. It is also recorded for all believers to illustrate the kinsman-redeemer relationship of Jesus Christ.

CHARACTERS

The main characters in the book of Ruth are:

Naomi: An Israelite woman who migrated to Moab with her husband and two sons to escape a famine in Israel.

Elimelech: Husband of Naomi who died in Moab.

Mahlon and Chilion: Sons of Naomi who died in Moab.

Orpha: The Moabite daughter-in-law of Naomi who chose to remain in Moab.

Ruth: The Moabite daughter-in-law of Naomi who returned to Israel with her.

Boaz: The son of the harlot Rahab. He was the near kinsman who redeemed Ruth and became her husband.

The unnamed kinsman: A nameless man who legally had the first right to redeem the property of Naomi and make Ruth his wife, but who chose not to do so.

PURPOSE

There are several purposes for the book of Ruth:

1. It demonstrates God's concern for all people. Ruth was a Gentile Moabites, yet God chose this beautiful heathen girl to become part of the family line from which the Messiah, Jesus Christ, would be born. Ruth was the great grandmother of King David and an ancestor of the Messiah.

   This is a type or example of how God adopts into His family the "Gentile" (heathen) people of the world through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ.

   God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation He that heareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him. (Acts 10:34-35)

2. It documents the genealogy of Jesus Christ. The final chapter traces the family history to King David.

3. The relationship between Ruth and Naomi is a type of the commitment which should exist between the Church and Jesus Christ.

4. The life of Naomi illustrates how God takes the bitter experiences of life and transforms them into beauty.

5. The relationship of Boaz to Ruth is a type of the redemption relationship between Jesus and His Church.

OUTLINE

CHAPTER ONE

JOURNEY TO MOAB (1:1-2):

Verse one identifies the time of the events of the book of Ruth during the period of the Judges. It also locates the events of chapter 1 verses 1-18 as occurring in Moab.
Moab was about 50 miles from Bethlehem on the opposite side of the Dead Sea. Elimelech took his two sons and his wife Naomi to this region to escape a famine in Israel.

Famine was one of the methods of judgment God used in Old Testament times to punish Israel when they sinned and served other gods. (See II Kings 8:1, Jeremiah 16:3-13; and Ezekiel 5:11-17).

Elimelech should not have gone to Moab because it meant he was fleeing from God's correction. God's land is better in famine than Moab in the time of plenty. The Moabite people served a God called Chemosh who they honored by sacrificing children (see Judges 11:24).

TRAGEDY IN MOAB (1:3-5):

While in Moab, Elimelech died and Naomi's two sons married Moabitess women named Ruth and Orpha although marriage by Jews to Moabites was forbidden by God (Deuteronomy 7:3; Nehemiah 13:23,25). Tragedy struck again and both sons of Naomi died. (It is possible they had always been sickly as the name of Mahlon means "sick" and Chilion means "pining.")

RETURN TO BETHLEHEM (1:6-18):

When the famine in Israel was over, Naomi planned her return to Bethlehem. She encouraged her daughters-in-law, Ruth and Orpha to remain in Moab. The decision she presented to them was actually spiritual. They could remain in Moab and return to their own people and their own gods if they desired. Naomi did not want Ruth and Orpha to come with her on the basis of their relationship or any reason other than a spiritual decision for God.

Naomi pointed out that there would be a better opportunity for Ruth and Orpha to remarry if they remained among their own people. Sometimes there appears to be no future if you go God's way, but as you will learn, Ruth was blessed because she chose the way of least opportunity.

Orpha was persuaded to remain in Moab, and kissed Naomi goodbye. Many people have affection for Jesus Christ but come short of salvation because they cannot forsake the old life. Like Orpha, they go back to the world seeking rest.

Naomi gave Ruth the option of returning with her sister-in-law, but Ruth clung to Naomi with a beautiful promise of commitment to her and God. Verse 18 records Ruth's resolution which shut the door on her old life. True commitment to Jesus requires that you shut the door on the old life of sin.

Note the elements of Ruth's commitment which are a type of your relationship to Jesus:

1. **Accept:** She accepts the way of Naomi: She will go with her. The first step in commitment to Jesus is accepting His way of salvation.

2. **Abide:** She will dwell with Naomi and become settled and stable. After accepting Jesus, you must progress on to stability in your relationship.

3. **Align:** Ruth aligns herself with Naomi in terms of her people, precepts, position and problems:

   People: Ruth aligns herself with Naomi's relatives just as believers should align themselves with the people of God.

   Precepts: She aligns herself with the precepts of Naomi, the faith and the God upon which these precepts are based. As a believer, you must align yourself with the precepts in God's Word.

   Position: Wherever Naomi dwells, Ruth will dwell. You must likewise position yourself with the cause of Christ.

   Problems: She will be with Naomi in good times and hard times, even in death. Your commitment to Jesus should be a dedication unto death, not a short term commitment for good times only.

ARRIVAL IN BETHLEHEM (1:19-22):

Upon arrival in Bethlehem, Naomi's old friends hardly recognize her. They question, "Is this Naomi?" Perhaps the years of sorrow in Moab had dealt harshly with her appearance. She certainly was not the same person who left Israel. Note the contrasts:

l. She went out "pleasant," but came back "bitter": Naomi told them to no longer call her "Naomi" which means "pleasant," but to call her "Mara" which means "bitter."

2. She went out full, but came home empty. Naomi did not accuse Satan of causing her plight. Naomi recognized the correction of the Lord which came to her in the heathen environment in which she placed herself.

Many times we do not progress spiritually because we blame Satan instead of recognizing the correcting hand of God and changing our sinful ways. The purpose of God's correction by God is given in Hosea:

Come, and let us return unto the Lord; for He hath torn, and He will heal us; He hath smitten and He will bind us up. (Hosea 6:1)

Correction drew Naomi back to God. It would not be long and the Lord would heal Naomi's bitterness and make her part of a beautiful plan for the redemption of all mankind.

Naomi's use of the word "Lord" ("El Sadday" in Hebrew) demonstrates she had not lost her faith in God. The word speaks of the sufficiency of God. Although she was empty and bitter, she still acknowledged the sufficiency of God to meet her need. She was saying,"I am in need, but God is sufficient."

3. She left in time of famine, but returned in time of harvest: This third contrast is not readily apparent but is found in verse 22. Naomi left Israel in a time of famine, but returned to reap a harvest in both the spiritual and natural realms.

CHAPTER TWO

RUTH IN THE FIELDS OF BOAZ (1-17):

Ruth went to glean in the fields of Boaz which was an acceptable occupation for young women of that day. Land owners were commanded by God to leave a portion of the crop for the poor to glean.

Ruth showed initiative as she set out to work. You cannot just sit and wait for God to work in your life, but you must cooperate and work with Him. Ruth did what needed to be done. Even the details of life necessary to provide a living are profitable when done for the glory of God (I Corinthians 10:31).

There is no fate in the life of a Christian, neither was it fate that Ruth chose to work in the field of a kinsman of Naomi's, named Boaz. God is at work and guides you in the routine, even the desperate circumstances of life. Boaz looked with favor on Ruth and told her to remain in his field throughout the harvest. He also made special provisions for her at mealtime.

THE RETURN OF RUTH TO NAOMI (18-23):

Ruth returned home shared the events of the day with Naomi who recognized the hand of God at work. Boaz was a near kinsman and as such had certain obligations by law towards Ruth and Naomi.

CHAPTER THREE

NAOMI'S PLAN (1-5):

Recognizing the hand of God, Naomi shared a plan with Ruth. Being a near kinsman, Boaz had a responsibility to redeem property belonging to Naomi, to marry Ruth, and to raise up children to carry on the family name (Deuteronomy 25). Instead of bringing Boaz before the public and forcing him to redeem her, Ruth quietly provided him the opportunity to accept or reject her by going to him in secrecy at night.

THE RESULTS (6-13):

Ruth was within her right asking Boaz to "redeem" (marry) her. Boaz was willing and eager to perform his responsibility, but said there was a kinsman closer than he who had the first right. It is not enough to work God's plan, but it must be done by His methods. Boaz must first approach the other kinsman and give him his rightful opportunity to redeem Ruth. He told Ruth to wait until morning, then return home and wait for him to settle the matter.

THE RETURN TO NAOMI (14-18):

Ruth returned to Naomi and told her all that happened. Naomi told her to be patient, for Boaz would not rest until he concluded the matter. God did not rest until redemption was accomplished for all mankind through Jesus Christ. He will not rest in arranging the circumstances of your life until redemption is accomplished in you personally. Note that Ruth did not return to Naomi empty handed (verse 18). Naomi's "empty" days, to which she referred in chapter one, were about to be over.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE REDEMPTION PROCESS (1-12):

Boaz met with the near kinsman, who is unnamed. The meeting was at the city gate in the presence of the elders, which was the center for business and legal transactions. The other kinsman refused his right to redeem Ruth because if he claimed Naomi’s property, he must also marry Ruth. If they had a son, then a portion of his property would go to Elimelich's house instead of his own children.

Boaz redeemed Ruth according to custom, in the presence of witnesses. His redemption is a type of Jesus Christ redeeming us from sin. According to the law the redeemer had to be:

1. A near kinsman (Deuteronomy 25).

2. Willing to redeem (John 10:18; Isaiah 53:7, Galatians 2:20).

3. Have the ability to redeem (John 10:11-18).

4. Be free himself, just as Jesus was free from sin.

5. Have the price of redemption, which was the blood line. We are redeemed by the blood of Jesus (I Peter 1:18-19 Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 10:4).

Just as Boaz met these requirements in the natural redemption of Ruth, Jesus met them in the spiritual redemption of man.

THE UNION OF RUTH AND BOAZ (13-17):

Ruth and Boaz were married and had a child. Naomi was no longer bitter, but blessed of the Lord. Her blood line was continued and her property redeemed. She took the child and became nurse to it. It is Naomi, not Ruth, that is featured in the closing scenes of the book. Naomi's life has changed from bitter to pleasant.

No matter what your circumstances of life, God wants to change you from bitter to pleasant. He wants to change your name, so to speak from "Mara" to "Naomi." He is working in your circumstances to restore all that has been lost and then use you as part of His plan.

THE GENEALOGY OF DAVID (18-22):

The book of Ruth closes by recording the genealogical link between Ruth and David, who was part of the Messianic line of Jesus Christ. This final note demonstrates God's purpose and plan in history and that life is not just haphazard. God is at work in all the circumstances of life to bring forth His plan of salvation to the nations of the world.

CHARACTER TRAITS OF RUTH

Several beautiful character traits are evident in the personality of Ruth. Read the references on the next page and study the beautiful nature evidenced by this woman of God. Ask God to build these qualities into your own life:

Reference	Trait
1:16-17	Love, commitment
1:18	Steadfastness
2:2	Humility (to glean); industrious; respect (she asks permission of Naomi)
2:14	Temperance (ate only enough to suffice)
2:18-19	Accountable (to Naomi with her work)
2:23	Faithful
3:5	Obedient
3:10	Submissive to law of God (not seeking young men, but God's plan)
3:10	Eternal values, not wealth in mind
3:14	Concerned about the "appearance of evil" (left before daylight)
3:18	Patient (after she had done what she could, she left the results to God)

SELF-TEST

1. Look at the list of names below in list one. Read list 2. Put the number of the sentence which best describes the person in list one in the blank provided in front of his or her name. The first one is done as an example for you.

_3__Mahlon and Chilion	1. An Israelite woman who went to Moab with her family.
____Naomi	2. Husband of Naomi who died in Moab.
____Elimelech	3. Sons of Naomi who died in Moab.
____Ruth	4. Near kinsman who redeemed Ruth.
____Orpha	5. Naomi's daughter-in-law who remained in Moab.
____Boaz	6. Naomi's daughter-in-law who returned to Israel.

2. List three purposes for the book of Ruth.

   (1)_____

   (2)_____

   (3)_____

3. During what period of Israel's history did the events of the book of Ruth occur?

_____

_____

4. In what two places did the events in this book happen?

   _____and_____

5. Who wrote the book of Ruth?_____

6. Write the Key Verse from memory:

_____

_____

_____

7. Read each statement below. If it is TRUE, put a letter T in the blank in front of the statement. If it is a FALSE statement, put the letter F on the blank.

_____a. Famine was used by God as a way to judge and correct Israel.

_____b. Naomi means "bitter."

_____c. Mara means "pleasant."

_____d. Boaz had the first right to redeem Ruth.

_____e. The unnamed kinsman did not redeem Ruth because he did not like her.

_____f. The relationship of Boaz and Ruth is a type of the redemption relationship between Jesus and believers.

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Read the story of the harlot Rahab in Joshua 2. Then turn to Hebrews 11:31 and note that she is included in the list of Old Testament characters credited by Paul as having demonstrated great faith.

   Rahab was the mother of Boaz, and as such is included in the ancestry of Jesus Christ. Isn't it wonderful that God includes all races (Ruth who was a heathen Moabite) and all backgrounds (Rahab who was a harlot) in the earthly family of Jesus?

   It is the same in the spiritual family of believers. No matter what your race, culture, or background, you can become part of the family of God through faith in God, repentance of sin, and accepting Jesus Christ as your personal Savior.

2. For further background on the period during which the events of the book of Ruth occurred, read the book of Judges. Note the seven cycles of sin, punishment, and deliverance experienced by Israel. As you study, complete the chart below. The first cycle is done for you as an example:

The Cycle Of Judges

First Cycle:	Judges 3:7-11
Sin:	Idolatry
Punishment period:	Eight years
Deliverer and Judge:	Othniel
Second Cycle:	Judges 3:12-31

Sin:_____

Punishment:_____

Deliverer and Judge:_____

Third Cycle: Judges 4,5

Sin:_____

Punishment:_____

Deliverer and Judge:_____

Fourth Cycle: Judges 6-8:32

Sin:_____

Punishment:_____

Deliverer and Judge:_____

Fifth Cycle: Judges 8:33-10:5

Sin:_____

Punishment:_____

Deliver and Judge:_____

Sixth Cycle: Judges 10:6-chapter 12

Sin:_____

Punishment:_____

Deliverer and Judge:_____

Seventh Cycle: Judges 13-16

Sin:_____

Punishment:_____

Deliverer and Judge:_____

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BOOK OF ESTHER

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Summarize the story of Esther.
- Identify the purposes of the book.
- Recognize that God has a special plan for you.

KEY VERSE:

> **For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? (Esther 4:14)**

INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter you studied the Book of Ruth, the Gentile woman who lived among the Jewish people. This chapter focuses on Esther, the Jewish woman who served as queen among the Gentile people. The book which bears her name tells of a plot to destroy the entire Jewish nation which would have ended the blood line of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Although the book does not mention God by name, it speaks of His intervention in the affairs of men to care for His people and accomplish His divine purposes. It also shows how each one of us has an important part in God's plan. Before proceeding with this study, read the book of Esther.

NAME

The book is named for the main character, Esther. Originally her Hebrew name was Hadassah. Her name means "star of the east."

AUTHOR

The author of the book is unknown.

TIME

From the best evidence, the story of Esther occurred during the rule of the king who is known in secular history as Xerxes. In Esther, the name used for this king is Ahasuerus, the Hebrew form of the Greek name Xerxes. The nature of the court, social customs, and state of affairs described in Esther fit perfectly into the secular history of this time which was around 473 B.C.

SETTING

The setting was in the palace at Shushan which was in a city in Elam 150 miles east of Babylon. An estimated two to three million Jews were living there during the time of Esther.

TO WHOM

This book was probably prepared for the Jews scattered all over Persia, as well as for those in Palestine, to tell them how God had saved them from death. For the Christian, it shows God's intervention on behalf of His people.

MAIN CHARACTERS

Ahasuerus: King over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia.

Vashti: The queen who refused the king's orders and lost her position as queen.

Esther: The new queen, a Hebrew woman.

Mordecai: Esther's cousin, who raised her from a child.

Haman: An enemy of the Jewish people who devised a plot to destroy them.

PURPOSES

The purposes of Esther:

1. The book contains an important episode in Jewish history which provided the Jewish people of Persia and Palestine with the story of the intervention of God to spare their lives.

2. It demonstrates how God works for His people. He intervenes in the affairs of men to fulfill His will and places His people in the right places at the right times for the advancement of His Kingdom.

OUTLINE

CHAPTER ONE

THE GREAT FEASTS (1-9):

Ahasuerus held a feast for his princes and servants which lasted for 180 days. Meanwhile, Vashti, the queen, was hosting the women at a separate feast in her quarters.

A DOMESTIC PROBLEM (10-12):

On the seventh day of the feast, the king called for Queen Vashti to come and show her beauty to the men. She refused his request, and the king was angry.

A ROYAL COMMANDMENT (13-22):

The wise men counseled the king to dethrone Vashti and give her position to another.

CHAPTER TWO

THE SEARCH FOR A QUEEN (1-4):

The King began the search for a queen. Young women were brought from all over the kingdom and prepared for his review.

ESTHER ENTERS THE COMPETITION (5-11):

A Jewish man named Mordecai had raised his cousin Esther since she was an orphan. Esther entered the competition to become queen. Mordecai told Esther not to let the people of the royal court know she was a Jew, then he waited to see what would happen to her.

ESTHER SELECTED AS QUEEN (12-21):

Each woman in the competition for the position of queen appeared before the king. When Esther appeared, she was selected and a special feast was given in her honor.

THE PLOT AGAINST THE KING (22-23):

Two men, Bigthan and Teresh, planned to kill the king. Mordecai learned of the plot and informed Esther who told the king. Both men were hanged.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROMOTION OF HAMAN (1-6):

King Ahasuerus promoted Haman, one of his servants, to a position over all the princes and servants. Everyone showed honor to him except Mordecai, and Haman was angry.

HAMAN'S PLOT (7-15):

Learning that Mordecai was a Jew, Haman went before the king and bribed him to issue an order that on a certain date all the Jews were to be destroyed. The King signed the order and it was sent throughout the kingdom.

CHAPTER FOUR

MOURNING OF THE JEWS (1-11):

When news of the dreadful order reached the Jews, they began to mourn. Mordecai put on sackcloth and rubbed himself with ashes, which was a custom when one was mourning.

ESTHER HEARS THE NEWS (9-12):

Sheltered in the palace, Esther had not heard of the new law. When she was told Mordecai was wearing sackcloth and ashes, she sent him clothing. He refused the beautiful garments, and sent her a copy of the order which had been issued.

THE PLAN FOR DELIVERANCE (10-17):

A plan for deliverance was made by Esther and Mordecai. The Jews would fast and pray for Esther and she would go in to the king to seek help for her people.

To approach the king without being summoned could result in death, but Esther was willing to pay the price if necessary. She said, "If I perish, I perish."

The key verse, Esther 4:14, presents an important truth. God had a plan for deliverance. If Esther did not fulfill her appointed role, then deliverance for the Jews would come from some other source.

God has a special plan for each of us in His overall plan to reach the world with the Gospel. His desire is that you find your position and fulfill His will. But if you do not find your place in the kingdom, God will still proceed with His plan and deliverance will arise from another source.

As Esther, you have come into His Kingdom for a special purpose. This is why it is important to discover your position and ministry in the Body of Christ.

CHAPTER FIVE

AN INVITATION TO A BANQUET (1-8):

Esther appeared before the king, and he accepted her. She invited the King and Haman to a banquet and during the meal requested their presence at a special banquet she would give the following day.

HAMAN'S PRIDE (9-14):

Haman left the queen's presence and boasted about his invitation to all of his friends. Yet even this great honor brought him no joy as long as Mordecai refused to honor him. Haman's wife and friends suggested he build a gallows and hang Mordecai. Haman was pleased with this idea, and the gallows were constructed. (Gallows were a tall wooden structure from which a rope was hung for purposes of execution).

CHAPTER SIX

MORDECAI HONORED (1-14):

The king had a sleepless night and as he was reviewing court records it was brought to his attention that Mordecai had stopped a murderous plot against his life. The king inquired as to what reward was given to Mordecai for this, and was informed that nothing had been done.

HAMAN HUMILIATED (12-14):

Meanwhile, Haman was coming to the King to ask permission to hang Mordecai. Before he could speak, the King ordered him to honor Mordecai for his loyalty to the kingdom. Haman reluctantly obeyed the orders and was quite upset that his enemy was honored.

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE FEAST OF ESTHER (1-6):

Esther held a special feast and during dinner revealed her true identity and the plot of Haman to kill her and the Jews.

HAMAN PUNISHED (7-10):

The king ordered Haman to be hanged from the gallows prepared for Mordecai.

CHAPTER EIGHT

NEW ORDERS FROM THE KING (1-14):

Esther asked the king to issue orders to save her people. The King sent out a decree for deliverance of the Jews.

MORDECAI HONORED (15-17):

Mordecai received additional honors from the king, and there was feasting and rejoicing by the Jews throughout the kingdom. The previous law which was issued to bring death to the Jews is a type of the death which sin brought upon man. The Bible records "the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

The second law brought life instead of death, just as the coming of Jesus Christ brought life to sinful man. It does not eliminate the previous law requiring death for sin but, just as the order of King Ahasuerus, it provides a way of escape.

CHAPTER NINE

DELIVERANCE OF THE JEWS (1-11):

The Jews were delivered from death. With the king's permission, they fought against their enemies and overcame them.

HOUSE OF HAMAN DESTROYED (12-16):

Final deliverance came to the Jews as the entire family of the wicked Haman was destroyed.

THE FEAST OF PURIM (17-32):

A special feast celebrating the deliverance of the Jews was held and the date marked to be observed annually.

CHAPTER TEN

Mordecai was selected to serve next to the king and represent his people and their interests. Mordecai and Haman provide an interesting contrast in the use and abuse of power. One used position to help others, while the other used it to destroy.

CHARACTER TRAITS OF ESTHER

Esther demonstrated some beautiful personality traits. Study the references on the following page. Ask God to help you incorporate some of these traits into your own life:

Reference	Trait
2:15	Beautiful and modest
2:9-17; 5:1-3	Winsome
2:10	Obedient
2:15	Related well to those around her
2:22	Not self-seeking (revealed plot in name of Mordecai instead of taking credit herself)
4:16	Humble
4:16; 7:6	Courageous
2:22; 8:1-2; 7:3-4	Loyal

AN IMPORTANT LESSON

One important lesson in the story of Esther is that although the wicked may appear to prosper, in the end, God's people will triumph.

David spoke of this in Psalms. In a way, he summarized one of the main concepts of the book of Esther:

> **I have seen the wicked in great power, and spreading himself like a green bay tree.**
>
> **Yet he passed away, and lo, he was not; yea, I sought him, but he could not be found.**
>
> **Mark the perfect man and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace.**
>
> **But the transgressors shall be destroyed together; the end of the wicked shall be cut off.**
>
> **But the salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; he is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them, and deliver them; he shall deliver them from the wicked and save them because they trust in him. (Psalms 37:35-40)**

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory:

_____

_____

_____

2. Name two purposes for the book of Esther:

(1)_____

(2)_____

3. Look at the list of names in list one. Find the sentence in list two that best describes each name. Put the number of that sentence in front of the proper name.

_____Vashti	1. The new queen, a Hebrew woman.
_____Esther	2. The cousin of Esther who raised her.
_____Mordecai	3. Enemy of the Jewish people.
_____Haman	4. Queen who refused the king's orders and lost her position.

4. Who wrote the book of Esther?

_____

5. Where did the story occur?

_____

_____

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

In the chapters on Ruth and Esther, we presented analyses of their character traits. The study of characteristics of godly leaders in the Bible provides knowledge of positive traits which you can seek to develop in your own life. The study of ungodly characters provides warning of negative traits you should avoid.

To expand your knowledge of the book of Esther and develop your own skills in doing character studies, analyze the characters of Haman and Mordecai. These two men provide an interesting contrast of positive and negative traits. Read the book of Esther again, observing the characteristics of each man. Record your study on the following charts:

Character Traits Of Mordecai:

Reference	Character Trait

Character Traits Of Haman:

Reference	Character Trait

CHAPTER SIX

THE RELATIONSHIP OF JESUS TO WOMEN

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Discuss Christ's major encounters with women during His earthly ministry.
- Recognize your relationship to Jesus is based on God's will.

KEY VERSE:

> **For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother and sister and mother. (Matthew 12:50)**

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter you will study the relationship of Jesus Christ to women. In the next chapter, you will expand upon the general background gained in this chapter to study all Jesus communicated to and about women.

In the personality of God, there is a blend of the characteristics of both father and mother. The Old Testament pictures motherhood when Isaiah records God's words:

> **Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. (Isaiah 49:15)**

> **As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you. (Isaiah 66:13)**

Jesus reflected a mother's instinct when He said:

> **O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings. (Matthew 23:37)**

The teaching of Christ was "sexless" because nowhere does He give instructions applicable to women only. There are only a few instructions to His disciples which apply to men alone. (For examples, see Matthew 5:28,32 and 23:8.)

WOMEN AND DISCIPLESHIP

Christ included women in His teaching. In Mark 7:10-11 He spoke of honoring parents, and repeated the words "father" and "mother" four times in two verses. There was a Greek word for "parents" which He could have used, but He apparently wanted to emphasize that both mother and father be honored equally.

When Jesus spoke regarding discipleship, He included the females:

> **Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division...The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother-in-law against her daughter in law. (Luke 12:51,53)**

Another passage regarding discipleship includes a reference to women:

> **There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children ...for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold...houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children. (Mark 10:29-30)**

On one occasion, when Jesus was speaking to a crowd, His mother and brothers came looking for Him. When told they were seeking Him, Jesus said:

> **Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples and said, Behold my mother and my brethren. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father...the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. (Matthew 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35)**

This verse presents an important truth regarding your relationship to Jesus. Your relationship is not based on whether you are male or female, young or old, married or single. Your relationship is based upon doing God's will. Part of "doing God's will" is accepting Jesus as personal Savior, as God is...

> **...not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. (II Peter 3:9)**

DEFENSE OF WOMEN

On two occasions, Jesus defended women. When some mothers brought their children to Jesus to be blessed, the Disciples rebuked them but Jesus said:

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the Kingdom of God. (Mark 10:14)

When Mary of Bethany poured costly perfume on Jesus, the Disciples called it a waste. Jesus said her act would be told as a memorial wherever the Gospel was preached because she understood the plan for His death and burial and was anointing Him in preparation for it.

WOMEN IN THE COMPANY OF CHRIST

Christ did not call a woman as one of the twelve disciples selected at the beginning of His public ministry. To have chosen a woman for such close association would not have been considered proper. The Bible does refer to certain women who joined the traveling company of Jesus to minister:

It came to pass afterward, that he went throughout every city and village, preaching and shewing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God; and the twelve were with him.

And certain women, which had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, Mary called Magdalene, out of whom went seven devils, And Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others, which ministered unto him of their substance. (Luke 8:1-3)

Some people believe because Christ did not call any women among the original twelve, there should be no women leaders in the Church. But He also did not choose a Gentile, yet the Gospel was extended to the Gentiles and we have had many great Gentile spiritual leaders. He did not organize anything resembling most Churches today, with one pastor trained in a seminary, Sunday schools, Church boards, etc., yet we freely use these in our Church structure.

THE COURTESY OF CHRIST

Christ was always courteous to women. He never talked down or spoke angrily to them. At the age of twelve, Jesus went with his parents to a Passover Feast in Jerusalem. At the end of the first day of the return journey home, His parents could not find Him in the caravan, so they returned to the city. Finally, they found Him with the religious leaders in the temple. When His mother rebuked Him, His response was a simple explanation and then He went home with His parents and was subject (obedient) to them (Luke 2).

One occasion where Jesus spoke with what might appear to be a lack of courtesy was at the wedding in Cana. When the host ran out of wine, Jesus's mother told Him and His answer was:

Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come. (John 2:4)

This did not mean He did not respect the suggestion that He do something about the problem. The term "woman" was not one of disrespect. In the proper timing, Jesus did what Mary desired and miraculously turned water into wine. Mary was not offended at His answer, but told the servants:

> **Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it. (John 2:5)**

When the mother of James and John came to Jesus with the selfish request that her sons be seated at His right and left sides in the Kingdom of Heaven, He did not rebuke her. He replied:

> **Ye know not what ye ask..to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom prepared of my Father. (Matthew 20:20-23)**

Read Matthew 15:21-28 where a Gentile woman asked for her daughter to be healed. Christ's answer did not reflect discourtesy because the word "dog" was a commonly used term referencing the Gentiles.* The exchange with this woman ended in Christ's highest commendation, "O woman, great is thy faith."

There are three incidents recorded in Scripture where Jesus ministered to adulteresses. Look these up and read them in your Bible:

John 8:2-11:	The woman caught in adultery.
Luke 7:38-39:	The adulteress washing Jesus feet.
John 4:5-30:	The woman at the well.

In each case, Jesus displayed courtesy, love, and a forgiving attitude.

The encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well is interesting in studying the relationship of Jesus to women. The Samaritans were enemies of the Jews and were considered uneducated and offensive. In addition, this women was an adulteress.

But Jesus chose this woman, a Gentile and a sinner, as the first person (as far as Scripture records) to whom He revealed that He was the Messiah. He considered her capable of grasping this great spiritual truth. She became an evangelist instantly and ran to the city to bring people to Christ. The result was...

> **...they besought Him that He would tarry with them; and He abode there two days. And many more believed because of His own. (John4:41-42)**

---

* The word "Gentile" refers to nations other than Israel.

During a visit in the home of Mary and Martha, Martha was upset because of all the household chores. She complained because Mary did nothing but sit at the feet of Jesus. Instead of rebuking her, Jesus answered:

> **Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things. But...Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. (Luke 10:41)**

When a poor widow put two mites in the offering box, Jesus courteously commended the small donation. He said:

> **This poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury; for all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all she had. (Mark 12:43-44)**

The Gospels show that Jesus regarded women as worth communicating with, capable of grasping deep spiritual truths, exercising great faith, and setting standards of sacrificial giving.

COMPASSION ON WOMEN

A special characteristic of Christ's attitude toward women was compassion. When He raised the son of the widow of Nain from the dead, He appears to have done it primarily out of compassion for her:

> **And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said unto her, weep not. (Luke 7:13)**

It was His compassion for widows which aroused His anger against those who prayed for public show and then stole widow's houses:

> **Beware of the scribes....which devour widows houses, and for a shew make long prayers. (Luke 20:46-47)**

When He fed the multitudes, which included women, it was because He had compassion on them. Read these accounts in Mark 6 (noting verse 34) and Mark 8 (noting verse 2).

When Jesus spoke of the future destruction of Jerusalem, He added this compassionate warning:

> **Woe to them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days. And pray ye that your flight be not in the winter. (Mark 13:17-18)**

When Jesus was on the way to Golgotha carrying the cross, there were many women in the crowd around the soldiers and prisoners. These women were mourning for Him. His concern was more for them than for Himself. He said:

Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.

For behold, the days are coming in which they will say, Blessed are the barren, and the womb that never bare, and the paps that never gave suck. (Luke 23:28-29)

Right to the end of His earthly ministry, in the midst of His own suffering, His compassion and concern for women never failed.

SELF-TEST

1. Your relationship with Jesus is based on...

_____

2. Write the Key Verse from memory:

_____

_____

_____

3. Read the names in list one. Select the sentence in list two which tells what Jesus said to each person or group. Put the number of that sentence in front of the correct name.

_____Women with children	1. This will be told as a memorial for her.
_____Mary the Mother of Jesus	2. Jesus told her He was the Messiah.
_____Adulteress washing feet	3. "Suffer the little children to come unto me."
_____Gentile woman who wanted healing for her daughter	4. Jesus commended her for her giving.
_____Martha	5. "Mary has chosen the better part."
_____Poor widow	6. "Great is thy faith."
_____Woman at the Well	7. "Woman, what have I to do with thee?"

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

To continue your study of the relationship of Jesus to women, study the following records of His conversations with them:

	Matthew	**Mark**	**Luke**	**John**
His mother:				
In childhood			2:41-50	
At Cana				2:1-11
On the cross				19:25-27
Martha:				
Serving			10:38-42	
Raising of Lazarus				11:1-44
Mary of Bethany	26:6-13	14:3-9		12:1-9
Mary of Magdala	28:9-10		8:2	14:14-18
Samaritan woman				4:1-42
Woman in adultery				8:1-11
Sinner			7:36-50	
Daughter of Phoenician woman	15:22-28	7:24-30		
Daughter of Jarius and Woman with issue of blood	9:20-25	5:25-42		8:43-56
Peter's mother-in-law	8:14-15	1:30-31		4:38-39
Widow's son		7:11-15		
Deformed woman			13:11-13	

CHAPTER SEVEN

THE MINISTRY OF JESUS TO WOMEN

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Discuss the parables of Jesus involving women in terms of people, problems, and principles.
- Apply principles of the parables to your own life and ministry.
- Discuss the miracles of Jesus involving women in terms of people, problems, and performance.
- Continue with independent study of Jesus's ministry to women.

KEY VERSE:

> **And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the book that should be written. (John 21:25)**

INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter we studied the relationship of Jesus to women. Jesus had important things to say to and about women. He taught on special subjects of interest to them and included women in some of His parables. He also ministered in miraculous ways to women during His earthly ministry. This chapter examines these aspects of Christ's ministry to women.

PARABLES OF JESUS

Parables were a method of teaching Jesus used frequently during His earthly ministry. A parable is "an earthly story with a heavenly meaning." A parable presents spiritual truths in the form of a story which the listener can understand easily.

Jesus used four special parables about women to present some important spiritual truths. Read each parable in your Bible before proceeding with the lesson. Each parable is viewed in terms of:

The Person: Involved in the parable.

The Problem: The situation which confronted the people in the parable. (The earthly story).

The Principle: The important truth Jesus was teaching. (The heavenly meaning).

Now, study the parables:

THE LOST COIN: Luke 15:8-10

The Person: A woman with ten pieces of silver.

The Problem: One piece was lost.

Principle: Jesus used this parable and two others to illustrate similar truths. Read the parable of the lost sheep preceding the parable of the coin (Luke 15:3-7). Then read the parable of the prodigal son which follows (Luke 15:11-32).

Christ's purpose in this series of parables was to answer an accusation of the Pharisees that He was receiving sinners and eating with them which Jewish people were forbidden to do (see verses 1-2).

Jesus was demonstrating the importance of reaching lost souls. It was necessary to receive sinners and relate to them in order to reach them with the salvation message. He used the illustrations of a lost sheep, a missing coin, and a wayward son to explain this truth. Property, money, and family were things valued by the Pharisees and they could relate to these illustrations.

Jesus used the example of a woman seeking for a lost coin as well as a man seeking a lamb. Women have a specific role in reaching lost souls. Like the woman in the parable, we need to light our spiritual lights and seek diligently for the lost. There is joy in the presence of the angels as we bring those who are lost to the Savior. Have you been seeking diligently for the lost?

THE PERSISTENT WIDOW: Luke 18:1-8

Person: A widow woman who was seeking justice from a wicked judge who feared neither God nor man.

Problem: She was seeking justice for her "adversary." The parable does not indicate who the adversary was or what evil he had done to her. The wicked judge would do nothing for the widow at first, but because she kept coming to him he decided to settle the case in her favor so she would not continue to bother him.

Principle: Jesus was illustrating that perseverance brings a response from God. Jesus used this example to encourage His followers to pray and not give up (verse 1). If an unjust judge finally responds, so a just God responds to the perseverance of His people and answers their requests:

> **The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.**
> **(James 5:16b)**

THE TEN VIRGINS: Matthew 25:1-13

Persons: Five wise women, five foolish women, and an unknown person or group warning of the approaching bridegroom.

Problem: Ten women were waiting for the arrival of a bridal party. Five women were wise and brought vessels with extra oil for their lamps. Five women were foolish and brought no extra oil.

All of the women fell asleep while they were waiting. Suddenly, a cry was given that the bridegroom was coming and all the women awoke to turn up their lamps. The foolish women discovered their oil was all used and their lamps were out. They tried to borrow oil from the wise women who had oil, but were refused.

While the foolish women were gone trying to buy oil, the bridegroom came and the wise women entered to the marriage feast with him. When the foolish women returned with their oil, the door was shut and they could not get in. It was too late. They had waited too long to prepare themselves.

Principle: This parable was presented by Jesus during a discussion with His disciples concerning the end of the world. Read the beginning of the discussion in chapter 24.

Chapter 25 is a continuation of this discussion. Jesus told His disciples that in the last days the spiritual situation would be similar to the parable of the virgins. Some people will be prepared to meet the Lord spiritually but will be "sleeping" and not alert to His returning. This is the group described as the "wise virgins."

Although they are saved, they are doing nothing to warn people around them of the soon coming of the bridegroom. Nevertheless, they experience a spiritual awakening right before His return and are prepared to meet Him.

The foolish virgins illustrate another group of people who are also unaware of Christ's coming. They are unprepared. They wait too late to fill their spiritual vessels and they do not go with Christ on His return.

They try to get in on the basis of the preparations of the wise virgins, but this is not possible. You cannot gain access to the Kingdom of God on the basis of someone else's experience. You must

make your own preparations to meet Him.

There is a third group of people in this parable. Although the virgins described as wise and foolish all slept, someone was awake to give the cry that the bridegroom was coming. There will be a group of God's people who will be alert to His soon return, awake spiritually and watching for Him to come. They will be used to alert the people of God who are sleeping and not aware of the short time before the return of Jesus.

To which category do you belong? Are you spiritually prepared to meet the Lord but not really alert to the fact that He is coming soon? Are you sleeping spiritually instead of sending out the cry to others to prepare for His return?

Are you like the foolish virgins? Perhaps you have not yet prepared yourself spiritually to meet Jesus. You have no oil in your vessel. You are asleep and empty spiritually. Hear the cry of His soon return and prepare yourself now, before it is too late.

Are you one of the unnamed third group, those who were alert to the soon return of the bridegroom and were warning and preparing others to meet Him? To which of these three groups do you belong?

THE WOMAN WITH LEAVEN: Matthew 13:33; Luke 13:20-21

Person: An unnamed woman.

Problem: She is preparing bread and uses a little bit of leaven to leaven three measures of meal. One "measure" was about a peck and a half of meal.

Principle: This parable is one of several Jesus used to illustrate truths regarding His Kingdom to which He refers as "the Kingdom of Heaven."

Many times in the Bible leaven is used as an example of evil. It is used to show how a little evil reproduces itself and increases into much evil just as leaven spreads throughout a lump of dough. In this parable, however, leaven is used to illustrate that in God's Kingdom, a little act can multiply to yield great results.

Just as a small bit of leaven spreads throughout the meal to prepare a great lump of dough for baking, so the leaven of God's Word reproduces itself. This is a principle we refer to as "leaven-like evangelism." Harvestime International Institute offers a course by this title centering on an evangelistic approach which will reproduce itself throughout the world.

This parable illustrates several important principles. First, you can have the leaven (the Word) and the lump that needs the leaven (the world), but nothing will happen until the Word (leaven) is placed in the hearts of the people of the world (the lump).

Second, the human instrument is the agent God uses to put the leaven in the lump. God chooses people like you to bring the Word to the world.

Third, small things reproduce to become great in the economy of God's Kingdom. A small attempt at leaven-like evangelism will continue to reproduce itself throughout the lump of the world. As the prophet Zechariah said:

For who hath despised the day of small things? (Zechariah 4:10)

A SUMMARY OF THE PARABLES

Jesus used women to illustrate some great truths about His Kingdom. The widow illustrates the importance of persevering in prayer that the Kingdom of Heaven will be set in order, the enemy defeated, and God's people avenged. The woman with the leaven demonstrates the importance of action in God's Kingdom. You must sow the leaven of the Word in the lump of the world.

But sowing is not enough. You must also learn how to reap. This is illustrated by the woman with the lost coin. She looked until she found the coin. You must not only sow the leaven of the Word, but you must reap the harvest and reach lost men and women.

Finally, the parable of the virgins reveals that in the closing days of time, some will be prepared to enter the Kingdom of God and others will not. The composite picture of women Jesus portrays through these parables is one of women who are active in the Kingdom of God, who will persevere in prayer, sow the seed of the Word, reap the lost, and give the warning cry to those who are spiritually sleeping.

MIRACLES OF JESUS

Jesus performed several miracles which involved women during His earthly ministry. You will record your own comments on this study. Review the pattern used in the study of the parables and follow it as you study the miracles of Jesus involving women. Record your study in terms of:

People: Involved in the miracle Jesus performed.

Problem: The need with which Jesus was confronted.

Performance: Jesus's response to that need. What was the miracle He performed and how did He do it? What were the results of the miracle?

PETER'S MOTHER-IN-LAW:

Matthew 8:1-15; Mark 1:30-31; Luke 4:38-39.

People:

Problem:

Performance:

WOMAN WITH THE ISSUE OF BLOOD:

Matthew 9:20-22; Mark 5:25-29; Luke 8:43-48.

People:

Problem:

Performance:

CANAANITE WOMAN'S DAUGHTER:

Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30.

People:

Problem:

Performance:

DEFORMED WOMAN:

Luke 13:11-13.

People:

Problem:

Performance:

JARIUS' DAUGHTER:

Matthew 9:18-19, 23-25; Mark 5:22,24, 38-42; Luke 8:41-42, 49-56.

People:

Problem:

Performance:

WIDOW'S SON AT NAIN:

Luke 7:11-15.

People:

Problem:

Performance:

BROTHER OF MARY AND MARTHA:

John 11:1-44.

People:

Problem:

Performance:

A SUMMARY OF THE MIRACLES

The outstanding characteristic of Jesus evident in each miracle which He performed involving women is compassion. Whether it was a short term illness like the fever of Peter's mother-in-law or a long term disease like the issue of the blood and the woman with the deformed back, He showed concern and compassion.

It is interesting to note that His miracles followed a progression. First He dealt with short term illness such as fever. Then He dealt with long term disease such as the issue of blood and the deformed back. Even the raising of the dead had a pattern. First He raised the widow's son and Jarius' daughter, both of whom had been dead only a short time. Then He raised Lazarus who had been dead and in the tomb for several days.

Jesus raised Jarius' daughter in the house right after her death. The widow's son was resurrected to life on the way to the graveyard. Lazarus was resurrected from the grave where he had been several days. It does not matter at what point Jesus enters the problems of your life. His power is sufficient at any stage of your need.

WORDS OF JESUS TO AND ABOUT WOMEN

In addition to the parables and the miracles which involved women, Jesus had much to say regarding topics of interest to women. These included instructions on the subjects of marriage, adultery, children, etc. Jesus also talked directly with women on many occasions.

In the "For Further Study" section of this chapter you will find a list of the subjects of interest to women on which Jesus spoke. These sections are designed to accomplish one of the major objectives of Harvestime Institute which is your continued study of God's Word. We want you to be able to examine the truth of the Word yourself. This section enables you to do that as you continue your study of the ministry of Jesus to women.

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory.

_____

_____

_____

2. List at least four parables which Jesus told that involved women:

(1)_____

(2)_____

(3)_____

(4)_____

3. List at least four miracles which He performed which involved women.

(1)_____

(2)_____

(3)_____

(4)_____

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Jesus made several comments on special subjects of interest to women, ie., on marriage, divorce, and children. To further your knowledge of His ministry to and about women, research the words of Jesus on...

MARRIAGE:

Matthew	19:4-6; 22:30
Mark	10:6-9; 12:25
Luke	20:34-35

CHILDREN:

Matthew	9:14; 18:3-5, 6, 10, 14; 21:16
Mark	9:37, 42; 10:14-15;
Luke	9:48; 18:17

DIVORCE-ADULTERY:

Matthew	5: 27-28; 31-32; 15:19; 19:8-9; 11-12; 17-18
Mark	7:21-22; 10:3,5,11-12, 19
Luke	16:18; 18:20

REGARDING WOMEN:

Matthew	5:28; 9:20, 22; 11:11; 13:33; 14:21; 15:38; 19:8; 22; 24:41; 26; 27:55; 28:5
Mark	5,7, 10:12; 12:22; 14:3; 15:40,41
Luke	1:28,42; 4:26-27; 7:8; 8:2,43,47; 10:38; 11:27; 13:11,12,16,21; 15:8; 17:27,35; 20:32; 22:57; 23:27,49,55; 24:10,22,24
John	2:4; 4:7,9,11,15,17,19,20,21,25,27,28,39,42; 8:3,4,9,10; 16:21; 19:26; 20:13,15

CHAPTER EIGHT

WOMEN IN THE BOOK OF ACTS

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Identify ministries of women in the early Church.
- Continue with independent study of the subject of women in the book of Acts.

KEY VERSE:

> **And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. (Acts 2:18)**

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter you will study each reference to women in the book of Acts. Since Acts tells of the organization of believers into the Church, the study provides knowledge of the position and ministry of women in the first Church.

Understanding the position of women in the early Church is important because it establishes the foundation for the ministry of women in the Church today. It will help you discover the special place of ministry God has for you in His Body, the Church.

GENERAL REFERENCES

There are numerous references to women in the book of Acts. Six verses refer to famous women who are not related to the study of the early Church:

-Pharaoh's daughter: Acts 7:21

-Candace, in whose service was the eunuch converted through Philip's witness: Acts 8:27

-Drusilla, wife of the governor, Felix: Acts 24:24

-Bernice, sister of King Agrippa: Acts 25:23

-The goddess Diana, worshiped as mother of gods and men, whose temple at

Ephesus was one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World: Acts 19:27

-Paul's sister: Acts 23:16

The remaining references to women are considered under general headings which reflect their positions and ministries in the Church.

MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

In most places where the Gospel was preached, women (both Jew and Gentile) are mentioned as being among those who believed. In Jerusalem, multitudes of both men and women believed. (Acts 5:14). In Samaria, both men and women believed as a result of Philip's preaching (Acts 8:12). At Joppa, Dorcas and other women were members of the early Church (Acts 9:36-43). At Lystra lived Timothy's mother Eunice and grandmother who were believers (Acts 16:1).

At Philippi, Lydia became the first Christian convert in Europe and there were other unnamed women who were part of the Church there (Acts 16:13-15).

In Thessalonica and Berea many of the chief women believed (Acts 17:4,12). The greatest number of women believers mentioned were in Macedonia. Even in Athens where response to Paul's preaching was minimal, a woman named Damaris and others believed (Acts 17:34).

These women were not just passive audiences. They were true believers in the Gospel and were baptized into the Church:

> **But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (Acts 8:12)**

INTERCESSORS

Women in the early Church were intercessors in prayer. Mary, the mother of Jesus, joined the men in prayer waiting for the coming of the Holy Spirit:

> **These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women and Mary, the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren. (Acts 1:14)**

When Peter was put in prison by Herod, the believers were praying in the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark. Rhoda, one of the women in the prayer meeting, met Peter at the door after the angel delivered him from the jail and carried news of the victory to others at the prayer meeting (Acts 12:12-16).

In the city of Philippi, a group of women met by the river to pray:

And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made, and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted there. (Acts 16:13)

The phrase "wont to be made" means that it was the habit of the women to gather there for prayer.

RECIPIENTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

In Acts 2:1, Luke records "they" were all in one accord in one place. These "all" were the same people mentioned in chapter 1:14-15 who were waiting for the outpouring of God's power. Mary was mentioned as one of those waiting for the Holy Spirit. This means when the Holy Spirit came on them "all," women were included. As observers asked what was happening, Peter's explanation of the coming of the Holy Spirit centered on the prophecy of Joel. It verified that God's power would be poured out upon women:

...this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel...I will pour out of my spirit on all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy...and on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit, and they shall prophesy. (Acts 2:15-18)

Centuries prior to the coming of the Holy Spirit, God provided for women to be included in the demonstration of His power.

PROPHETESSES

Acts records how women fulfilled Joel's prophecy:

And the same man (Philip the evangelist) had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. (Acts 21:9)

Because of this passage, the prophecy given by Joel, and some teachings of Paul which you will study later in this course it is important to understand the meaning of the word "prophesy." Two major Bible concordances, Strong's and Young's, as well as an excellent study of Bible words by Vine provide the following meanings for the word:

-Speaking under inspiration.
-Revealing the will, mind, counsel and ways of God.
-Publicly expounding.

The word "prophesy" also includes teaching or preaching under the inspiration of God as well as using the gift of prophecy, one of the special gifts of the Holy Spirit. You will study this later as you study the role of women in spiritual gifts.

SUPPORTERS OF GOD'S WORK

Women in Acts provided material support to the work of God. Lydia provided lodging to Paul's missionary team. Dorcas had a ministry to widow women which included providing them with clothing. In Corinth, Paul lived in the home of Priscilla, who not only shared in her husband Aquila's business but also had an important place in the Corinthian Church. They allowed Paul to share in their business during his stay in Corinth.

PERSECUTED AND PERSECUTORS

Women were victims of the severe persecution which came upon the early Church. Before the Apostle Paul's conversion, the Bible records that he entered into homes and temples of worship and bound both men and women to take them to Jerusalem for trial (Acts 8:3 and 9:2). Later, he admitted:

> **I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering both into prisons both men and women. (Acts 22:4)**

Women also served as persecutors of the early Church. In Antioch of Pisidia, some Jewish women called "devout and honorable" raised up persecution against Paul and Barnabas.

RESPONSIBLE SINNERS

Women were held accountable for sin. Perhaps the most tragic story involving a woman is the account in Acts 5:1-11 of a woman named Sapphira who joined her husband in a deceitful plan concerning money. As you read this story, note that it is an opposite situation to that of Adam and Eve. Here, Satan put the scheme in the husband's heart and Sapphira joined him in the plan. Sapphira was held equally guilty because she had full knowledge of her husband's sin and joined him in it. In moral issues, a woman cannot be blindly obedient to a husband and use the claim of submission to him to excuse her sin.

The same standard of holiness is expected from every follower of Christ, whether male or female.

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory.

_____

_____

_____

2. List at least four ministries in which women engaged according to the record of the book of Acts.

   (1)_____

   (2)_____

   (3)_____

   (4)_____

3. Read the following statements. If the statement is true, mark T in the blank in front of it. If it is false, mark F in the blank.

   _____a. Women were not allowed to prophesy in the early Church.

   _____b. Women were not responsible for their sin if their mate asked them to sin.

   _____c. Women were not allowed to pray and receive the Holy Spirit.

   _____d. There is no record that women were included in the prayer meetings held by the Church.

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. Acts documents that women were prophets in the early Church. The Old Testament reveals that they also served in this ministry prior to the coming of Christ. Study the following references for further information on the Old Testament prophetesses:

Miriam:	Exodus 15:20
Deborah:	Judges 4:4
Huldah:	II Kings 22:14; II Chronicles 34:22
Noadiah:	Nehemiah 6:14
Unnamed woman:	Isaiah 8:3

2. All the references to women in the book of Acts are recorded below. Continue your study by using this list. Some references do not give specific names but speak of groups of women. A column is provided for you to record comments on each reference. The first two are done as examples for you to follow:

Reference In Acts	**Woman**	**Comments**
Acts 1:14	Mary	Continued in prayer with disciples
2:17	Daughters	Will prophesy
2:18		
5:1-11		
5:14		
6:1		
7:21		
8:3		
8:12		
8:27		
9:2		

Reference In Acts	Woman	Comments
9:36		
12:12-16		
13:50		
16:1		
16:13		
16:14-40		
17:4		
17:12		
17:34		
18:2		
18:18		
18:26		
19:27		
21:5		
22:9		
22:4		
23:16		
24:24		
25:13		
25:23		
26:30		

CHAPTER NINE

WOMEN IN THE EPISTLES: SPECIFIC MINISTRIES

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Identify women with ministries mentioned in the Epistles.
- Summarize the ministries in which these women were engaged.
- Continue with independent study of the Epistles.

KEY VERSE:

> **Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the Word. (Acts 8:4)**

INTRODUCTION

We previously studied the position of women in the early Church as recorded in the book of Acts. The group of books known as the Epistles provide additional knowledge of women's ministries in the early Church. They also give specific instructions to women.

This and the following two chapters focus on "Women In The Epistles." This chapter discusses women with specific ministries who are mentioned in these books. The next chapter discusses the general position of women in the early Church as taught by the Epistles.

The final chapter on "Women In The Epistles" focuses on special categories of women addressed by these books, (i.e., single, widowed, married, young, old, mothers, etc.) and special instructions regarding the dress and disposition of women.

THE EPISTLES

The New Testament consists of four major divisions. These include the Gospels, which are the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John which tell of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ.

Acts is a special division which describes the formation of the early Church. There is one book of prophecy which is the final book in the New Testament. It is called Revelation.

All the other New Testament books are called Epistles because they were written to specific believers in a letter type format. They are an inspired part of the Word of God and applicable to all believers in addition to those to whom they were specifically addressed.

The following is a list of the Epistles and the names of the authors credited with writing them under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

☞These Epistles were all written by the Apostle Paul

Romans
I Corinthians
II Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
I Thessalonians
II Thessalonians
I Timothy
II Timothy
Titus
Philemon
Hebrews

☞These books were named for the person who wrote them

James
I Peter
II Peter
I John
II John
III John
Jude

WOMEN WITH MINISTRIES IN THE EPISTLES

WOMEN IN ROME:

Phoebe carried the great doctrinal statement of the book of Romans to the believers in Rome. In the original Greek text, Phoebe is referred to as a "diakonos." This word appears 22 times in the New Testament. In 18 of these, translators render it "minister" and three times as "deacon." In Phoebe's case, they change it to servant, perhaps reflecting bias on the part of the translators.

In introducing Phoebe to the believers in Rome, Paul says to:

> **...receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she has been a succourer of many, and of myself also. (Romans 16:2)**

Some have thought from this passage that Phoebe provided hospitality to Paul, fed him, did his laundry, etc. But the word "succourer" actually means helper and the feminine form of the word means "one who stands before, a chief leader." The consideration Paul requests is the same he asks for male leaders and elders in I Thessalonians 5:12-13 and I Timothy 5:17.

In Romans 16, Paul refers to another woman in Rome, Prisca, who is married to Aquila. This is the same woman called Priscilla by Luke. Prisca is the more formal form of her name. We already studied about this woman in Chapter Eight.

The word "helper" which Paul used to describe her means "fellow worker." Paul stressed that Prisca and Aquila not only risked their lives but were also involved in an important ministry to the Gentile Churches.

Other women on Paul's list at Rome include Mary, who worked hard for the believers; Narcissus, who seemed to be the head of a household; Tryphena and Tryphosa, whose names mean dainty and delicate; and "the beloved Persis" who also worked hard in the Lord. There is a woman named Julia, about whom we are told nothing, and two other women whose names are not given, the mother of Rufus and the sister of Nereus. Junia, mentioned in Romans 16:7, was noted by the apostles for her faith, and was a fellow prisoner with Paul for the cause of Christ.

WOMEN IN THE OTHER EPISTLES:

Chloe is mentioned in I Corinthians 1:11. She sent a report to Paul about some disturbing things going on in the Church at Corinth. In Philemon, Paul addresses Apphia, Philemon's wife. This couple had a Church in their home as did Lydia and Nympha.

Euodia and Syntyche mentioned in Philippians 4:2 may have done evangelistic work, since Paul describes them as "those women which labored (struggled) with me in the Gospel...with my other fellow laborers."

Paul extends greetings from "Claudia and all the brethren" in II Timothy 4:21 although we are not told anything about this woman.

SUMMARY

Review of specific women mentioned in the Epistles reveals that the position of women in the early Church were not passive. They struggled right along with the men to spread the Gospel message.

Godly women labored as fellow workers, had great responsibilities, organized Churches in their homes, and were imprisoned for their faith. They underwent persecution as did all the believers and when this forced them to leave Jerusalem, they preached the Gospel wherever they went:

> **Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the Word. (Acts 8:4)**

These women provide inspiring role models for Christian women who seek their own places of service in the spiritual harvest fields of the world.

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory:

_____

_____

_____

2. Look at the list of names in list one. Find the sentence in list two that best describes each name. Write the number of that sentence in front of the name in list one.

_____Phoebe	1. Risked her life to save Paul.
_____Junia	2. Carried the book of Romans from Paul to the Roman church.
_____Lydia	3. Sent Paul a report on the Church at Corinth.
_____Choloe	4. Fellow prisoner with Paul.
_____Prisca	5. Had a Church in her home.

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

The Epistles teach many important concepts applicable to the lives of believers in addition to the special subject of women on which these chapters are focused. To further your knowledge of these principles, as well as review the subject of women in the Epistles, we suggest you read each of these books. Using separate paper, prepare a chart for each book. On each chart list:

The name of the book: Write the book's name.
The author: (This was provided in the content of this chapter.)
Written to: You will always find who the Epistle is written to mentioned in the first chapter. Remember, although each book is addressed to specific believers in the early Church, each is inspired by the Holy Spirit and applicable to all believers.

As you read each chapter, record the following information on your chart:

Chapter number: Number of the chapter you are studying.
Summary of chapter: The summary should state in your own words the central message of the chapter.
Key verse of chapter: The key verse is a reference you select from the chapter which summarizes the major concepts or an outstanding principle of the chapter.
Personal application: How you will apply what is taught to your personal life? Explain how the chapter applies to you personally.

The short Epistle of Jude is reviewed below as an example of this study format:

The name of the book: Jude
The author: Jude (verse 1)
Written to: Them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called. (verse 1)
Chapter Number: One
Summary: Jude warns believers to beware of deceivers and hold fast to the true faith.
Key Verse: But beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 17
Application: There are deceivers who may try to turn me away from true faith in Jesus Christ. I should follow the instructions in verses 20 through 21 to avoid being deceived.

CHAPTER TEN

WOMEN IN THE EPISTLES: POSITION IN THE CHURCH

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Explain passages written by the Apostle Paul concerning women.
- Summarize the position of women in the early Church as taught in the Epistles.

KEY VERSE:

> **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)**

INTRODUCTION

The last chapter discussed women with specific ministries mentioned in the Epistles. Now we will study the general position of women in the Church as revealed in these same books.

Some of the teaching regarding women by the Apostle Paul is difficult to understand. Even the Apostle Peter mentioned the difficulty of interpreting all Paul shared under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit:

> **As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. (II Peter 3:16)**

Peter indicates there are some things difficult to understand, but that only the unlearned and unstable argue over them. Such contention is to their own destruction. In other words, arguments over such things do not help anyone and actually damages the one arguing.

Various commentators have interpreted Paul's teaching on women in many ways. Just remember that when interpretation varies, arguments should not arise between believers.

If the discussion in this manual differs from your own personal interpretation or that of your denomination, please realize it is not intended to cause division. If you have personal convictions in certain areas, then you need to abide by them for conscience sake, as Paul says. It is important to remember that all the instructions in the Epistles of Paul, as well as those in the other Epistles, were given within the context of a Church in which women were active in

ministry. We have already studied about their involvement in previous chapters on Acts and the Epistles. No passages in the Epistles can be used to forbid women access to dynamic Christian ministry like that of women in the early Church.

TEACHING AND PREACHING

One of the difficult passages in the Epistles affecting the role of women in the Church is in I Corinthians:

> **For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all Churches of the saints.**
>
> **Let your women keep silence in the Churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.**
>
> **And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the Church. (I Corinthians 14:33-35)**

This passage is often used to prohibit women from teaching or preaching in the Church. Paul does not mean women are to keep totally silent. In the preceding chapter, he provides much detail about how a woman should have her head covered when she prays and prophesies. (We will discuss this passage later in this chapter). Why would he waste time on this discussion if they were not supposed to speak in Church at all?

In the study on Acts you learned that at the coming of the Holy Spirit Peter said it fulfilled the prophecy of Joel. This prophecy stated the Holy Spirit was to come upon the "daughters and handmaidens" and they would prophesy.

I Corinthians 14 may be one of the passages that Peter refers to as "difficult to understand" in Paul's writings. The most important clue to the problem is the meaning of the Greek word translated "to speak" in verse 34. The word here does not refer to public speaking, but means "chatting, questioning, arguing."

Read I Corinthians 14 in your Bible. You will note that Paul's purpose in this chapter is to prevent confusion in the Church. His concern is that everything is done in order in the worship services. This is why he tells women not to question or chat in the middle of Church services but to wait and ask their husbands at home.

The cultural context in which this instruction was given must also be considered. In Jewish churches, the women sat in one section, the men in another. Apparently the Corinthian women were not only chattering but also shouting questions to their husbands in the men's section. One person who works among Jewish people says that even today he has heard the president of a synagogue bang on the pulpit and shout to the women's section to be quiet.

Proper order is Paul's concern in this passage and there is no conflict between this passage and his description of what a regular Church service should be:

> **When ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation...If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three...Let the prophets speak two or three...For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted. (I Corinthians 14:26-27, 29, 31)**

The pattern Paul describes for Church worship appears to be a very informal type of meeting. He tells every one that has a psalm, doctrine, tongue, revelation, or interpretation to present it in proper order. "Every one" includes women.

TOTAL SILENCE?

One other passage in the Epistles should be discussed here, as it is similar to the one in Corinthians:

> **Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection.**
>
> **But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence.**
>
> **For Adam was first formed, then Eve.**
>
> **And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression. (I Timothy 2:11-14)**

The word "silence" does not mean women are never to speak. If they were to learn in total silence, they could never ask questions or discuss what they are learning. The word "silence" Paul used calls for a calm, undisruptive spirit open to learning.

The words "usurp authority" means to dictate to or domineer over the man, to act in one's own authority. None of us should act in our own authority. As you will learn when we discuss the subject of submission, we all should submit to one another, male and female alike. But in this passage, Paul warns that women, especially, should never assume a domineering attitude over a man.

THE MORE SINFUL SEX?

In this passage Paul is not condemning women for their part in the fall into sin or indicating they are a more sinful sex. He is merely pointing out that when Eve acted in her own carnal will and

authority she was deceived. When you speak or act in a dictating, domineering spirit, you open yourself up to deception and sin.

Paul is certainly not releasing man from his responsibility in the fall. Eve was deceived and thought she would become like a god. Adam was not deceived but sinned with full understanding of what he was doing and the consequences.

THE COVERING

Another passage that has been the subject of much discussion is the one mentioned briefly above dealing with a woman and her covering. This passage is found in I Corinthians chapter eleven. Read verses 3-16 before proceeding with this discussion.

Some interpret the word "head" in this passage to mean man is the ruler over the woman. The Hebrew word used may mean "rule" but just as often means "beginning." Paul was speaking of Jesus being the beginning or ruler over the Church, just as man, created first in God's image, is the beginning of woman and she is from him. In the following chapter, we will discuss "headship" and submission as we study instructions in the Epistles directed to wives. Our concern here is with the portion of this passage on how women are to pray or prophesy.

Some think these instructions indicate women should have long hair and never cut it because it is their covering. Others believe it means a woman should wear a hat when she attends church services to cover her head. The important thing to remember in interpreting this passage is Paul's final statement in verse 16:

> **...but if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the Churches of God. (I Corinthians 11:16)**

He said there should be no contention or arguments about the subject. In verse 18 he notes his concern about such division in the Corinthian Church. Paul's greatest concern was for order and unity in the Church. Whatever interpretation is given to these passages it should not cause division.

This passage indicates man was first formed and then woman. It states that each is incomplete without the other. Men and women were created to be a mutual comfort and blessing to one another, not one a slave and the other a tyrant. As the woman was first formed out of the man, man is ever since formed out of the body of a woman. Just as it is the will of God that the woman accept her place of submission to her husband, so it is the will of God that man not abuse his leadership responsibilities.

Paul speaks of the importance of a woman praying with proper covering for her head. In Paul's time, the wearing of a veil by a married Jewish woman signified they were under submission to their husband. It was an outward custom signifying an inward attitude. Paul indicates that a woman's hair could also serve as a symbol of this covering (verse 15). It was not necessary for

men to wear a covering since they were the covering for the woman, designated by God to lovingly lead and care for her.

This passage does not mean unmarried women cannot pray or prophesy in Church. It means that when a woman prays or ministers, she should do so in an attitude of submission to God and, if she is married, to her husband. This attitude results in the power of God and his angels resting upon her. Praying or prophesying with a rebellious attitude is not effective. Right relationship to God and your mate is essential to powerful ministry.

Some still maintain the custom of wearing a hat or veil during worship to symbolize proper heart attitudes. Some maintain that women should wear long hair for the same purpose. These are issues dictated by custom or conviction and should be respected but not become divisive issues.

The important concept of Paul's teaching is this: A Christian woman should be in proper relationship to her husband by demonstrating an attitude of loving submission to him as she does to Jesus Christ. Ministry without this attitude is ineffective. Whether or not this is symbolized by the custom of the wearing of a veil or long hair as it was in Paul's time is not the important issue.

IN SUMMARY

We cannot interpret any of the passages discussed in this lesson as a barrier to women's ministry in the Church. If women were to keep total silence and not teach or preach then how did New Testament women organize Churches in their homes? Why did Paul send salutations and commendations to them in the Epistles if they were wrong in taking these leadership roles in the Church? Why did he give detailed instructions as to how they were to "prophesy" (speak) in the Church with proper covering?

We must view these passages in terms of Paul's permanent views on the subject of women. His final summary is that:

> **There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)**

All cultural barriers are broken in Jesus. All class barriers dissolve as we enter into the Body of Christ as true believers. Whether servant (bond) or master (free), we are one in Christ. Most important to women, there is neither male or female in Christ. Every ministry open to men is open to women as God appoints, anoints, and equips them for service.

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory.

_____

_____

_____

2. Read each statement below. If the statement is TRUE put the letter T in the blank in front of it. If the statement is FALSE, put the letter F in the blank in front of it.

   a._____Peter said Paul's writings contained some things that are difficult to understand.

   b._____Women are to keep total silence in the Church.

   c._____Women are not to teach or preach in the Church.

   d._____Joel's prophesy indicates women would prophecy or speak under the anointing of the Holy Spirit.

   e._____The word "silence" used by Paul calls for a calm, rather than a disruptive spirit.

   f._____Paul presents women as the more sinful sex.

   g._____Adam was deceived and this is why he fell into sin.

   h._____There is neither male or female in Jesus Christ.

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

All the references in the Epistles pertaining to women or subjects related to women are listed below. Use this list to continue your study of what the Epistles teach concerning women. Look up each reference and summarize it in the space provided.

Reference **Summary**

Romans 1:26

1:27

7:2

7:3

7:4

16:13

I Corinthians 5:1

7:1

7:2

7:3

7:4

7:8

7:9

7:10

7:11

7:12

7:13

7:14

7:16

7:27

7:28

7:29

7:32

7:33

7:34

7:36

7:38

7:39

9:5

11:3

11:5

11:6

11:7

11:8

11:9

11:10

11:11

11:12

11:13

11:15

14:34

14:35

Galatians 1:15

4:4

4:22

4:23

4:26

4:30

4:31

Ephesians 5:23

5:24

5:25

5:28

5:31

5:33

6:2

Philippians 4:3

Colossians 3:19

I Thessalonians 5:3

I Timothy 1:9

2:9

2:10

2:11

2:12

2:14

3:2

3:11

3:12

4:3

4:7

5:2

5:9

5:11

5:14

5:16

II Timothy 1:5

3:6

Titus 1:6

2:3

2:4

Hebrews 7:3

I Peter 3:1

3:5

3:7

CHAPTER ELEVEN

WOMEN IN THE EPISTLES: SPECIALIZED INSTRUCTIONS

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Demonstrate understanding of references in the Epistles pertaining to:
  - ~Widows
  - -Mothers
  - -Single women
  - -Elderly women
  - -Young women
  - -Married women
  - -Divorce
- Summarize Biblical teaching regarding the dress and disposition of women.

KEY VERSE:

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (Ephesians 5:21)

INTRODUCTION

The Epistles speak to women who are single, married, widowed, old, and young. In this chapter, you will study the instructions given to these and other special categories of women. You will also learn about the proper dress and disposition (attitude) of women.

MARRIAGE

The believers in Corinth asked Paul about marriage and celibacy (remaining single for dedicated service unto the Lord). Paul's personal opinion was that the unmarried and widows were happier if they remained single:

I say therefore to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them to abide even as I (that is, unmarried). (I Corinthians 7:8)

He also commented:

> **So then, he that giveth her in marriage doeth well; but he that giveth her not in marriage doeth better. (I Corinthians 7:38)**

Paul stated in I Corinthians 7:2 that marriage provides for physical and emotional needs:

> **Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. (I Corinthians 7:2)**

Any single person, man or woman, who has a strong sexual desire should get married.

Paul states his reason for suggesting people consider remaining single:

> **...that ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction. (I Corinthians 7:35)**

Believers are only to marry other Christians. We are not to be "yoked together" with unbelievers in marriage.

WIDOWS

One passage in the Epistles refers to unmarried widows:

> **Let not a widow be taken into the number (enrolled) under threescore years old, having been the wife of one man, well reported of for good works; if she have brought up children, if she have lodged strangers, if she have washed the saints' feet, if she have relieved the afflicted, if she have diligently followed every good work. (I Timothy 5:9-10)**

A widow who wants to remain single and devote her life to ministry should be at least 60 years old, have been married only once, and have a good reputation for her Christian work. Younger widows should not become members of this group because they might decide to marry again and break their vow to remain single for God's service. I Timothy 5 instructs the Church to provide for widows who have no family to provide for them.

ELDERLY AND YOUNG WOMEN

Paul advises younger women to:

> **... marry, bear children, guide the house. (I Timothy 5:14)**

Elderly women are given special instructions:

The aged women likewise that they be in behavior as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children.

To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. (Titus 2:3-5)

The teaching of younger women by older Christian women should be an integral part of the Church program. This ministry is neglected in many Churches today.

WIVES

Marriage was ordained by God at the beginning of the world when He created Eve for Adam. God's original plan was one man for one woman for life. Divorce was not part of God's original plan but happened because of the "hardness" of man's heart. Sin-hardened hearts result in fornication, adultery, and desertion, all of which are Scriptural reasons for divorce.

Fornication is any kind of sexual immorality, for examples, homosexuality and incest. Adultery is having sexual relationships with someone who is not your mate. Paul explains:

For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband.

So then, if while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. (Romans 7:2-3)

While these verses apply to the actual marriage relationship, they are also a type. Paul used this illustration to show how we must become dead to the law and its penalties in order to be married to Jesus Christ.

No matter what sin we may have committed, when we come to Jesus the penalties imposed by Old Testament law are eliminated. We are no longer under, or married to, the law. Its hold over us is broken. We have a new relationship with Jesus Christ. Even if you were divorced for unscriptural reasons, it is not the unpardonable sin. It can be forgiven by God just like any other sin.

Marriage is honorable, but engaging in sexual relations outside of marriage is wrong:

Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled; but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. (Hebrews 13:4)

Thessalonians records:

For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication. (I Thessalonians 4:3)

Some general instructions are given in the Epistles regarding the wives of deacons in the Church:

Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. (I Timothy 3:11)

Peter records a beautiful promise to wives who are married to unbelievers:

Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that if, any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives;

While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear. (I Peter 3:1-2)

Through loving submission, a woman with an unsaved husband can, without a word, lead him to God. The husband will observe the wife's holy conduct and her fear of God. He will notice the difference Christ makes in her life and through her example be drawn to the Savior.

Paul said if an unbelieving husband desires to remain with his wife, she is to stay with him:

And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.

But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage in such cases. (I Corinthians 7:13 and 15)

The reason Paul gives for the wife to remain with an unbelieving husband:

For what knoweth thou, O wife whether thou shalt save thy husband. (I Corinthians 7:16)

In counseling, the question often arises as to whether a wife should stay with a husband who is physically abusing her and/or the children. If the abuse is sexual with the children, this is fornication and she has Scriptural grounds for divorce. But what about physical abuse...for example, beatings?

The Bible indicates that the body is the "temple of the Holy Ghost." It belongs to God, and whoever defiles this temple, the Lord will destroy him. When a woman remains with a husband who is physically abusing her and her children, she is setting that man up to be destroyed by God. She should remove herself and the children from his presence until he can be counseled and overcome this problem.

We have used several quotes from I Corinthians 7 to this point in this chapter. Pause now and read the entire chapter of I Corinthians which deals with the subject of singleness and marriage.

SUBMISSION

There are several other passages in the Epistles that deal with the relationship between wives and husbands:

Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.

Husbands, love your wives and be not bitter against them.
(Colossians 3:18-19)
Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for it;

That He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the Word.

That He might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that lovest his wife loveth himself.

For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church; For we are members of His body, and of His flesh, and of His bones.

For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife and they two shall be one flesh.

This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church.

Nevertheless, let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband. (Ephesians 5:22-33)

Sometimes, these passages are applied improperly to force women into subjection. Husbands may try to get their wives to do evil by claiming these verses state they should submit. They may also "lord" it over their wives and expect them to act like servants or slaves.

The true concept of submission described here is a type of the relationship between Christ and the Church, which is referred to as His Bride. Paul indicates he is speaking of this relationship in verse 32. Jesus would never ask His bride to do something immoral and neither should a husband.

In Acts, you learned what happened to Saphira when she agreed with her husband to be part of an immoral scheme. In moral matters contrary to the law of God, the woman should not submit. She is responsible to God and will be judged for her own sin.

Paul expands this discussion in Colossians:

Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as is fit in the Lord. (Colossians 3:18)

The submission is to be as is fit in the Lord. Submission to perform immoral acts is not "in the Lord" nor fit (right).

There are other important facts about this relationship between husband and wife which parallels that of Christ and His Church. The Church is subject to Jesus voluntarily, not forcefully. A man should not force his wife into submission. She is to submit voluntarily because of the Christ-like love shown by her husband.

Husbands are also told to love their wives as Christ loved the Church. If husbands really love with the self-sacrificing love with which Christ loved the Church, the wife will desire to submit and please her husband in all things just as a true believer desires to please Jesus.

Remember: Jesus is perfect in His love for the Church even though the Church is not perfect in its submission to Him. The husband should demonstrate similar, perfect love towards his wife even if she is not perfect in her submission to him. A wife who is a true believer, of course, whose husband loves her in this manner, will strive to please and submit to his leadership, even as she does to Christ.

It is important to understand that this passage is not speaking of marriage to a godless man. It is speaking of the married life between two Spirit-filled believers who have a natural relationship

similar to the spiritual one between Christ and the Church. Paul is saying that if you are married to a Christian man who has this type of love for you, then you should be obedient and in submission to him.

The husband is to cherish and nourish his wife because they are one flesh and both members of Christ's Body. The wife is to be the most important person in the husband's life. He is to leave father, mother, and all others and be joined to his wife as one. He is to love his wife as he loves his own body. This makes submission and reverence to him a joy for the wife. She can submit easily to him, just as she submits to the Lord.

Notice the verse that precedes the passage we have been reviewing:

> **Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (Ephesians 5:21)**

Believers, both male and female, husband and wife, are to submit to one another, desiring to please one another in the Lord.
Peter comments regarding Old Testament women and the matter of submission:

> **For after this manner in the old time the holy women also, who trusted in God, adorned themselves, being in subjection unto their own husbands; Even as Sara obeyed Abraham calling him lord... (I Peter 3:5-6a)**

While Sara spoke with respect to Abraham and obeyed him, it does not mean she did not feel free to share her opinion. On one occasion, when she had requested Abraham to cast out Ishmael and Abraham refused, God spoke to Abraham:

> **In all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice. (Genesis 21:12)**

God supported Sarah's suggestion because He realized Abraham was still clinging to Ishmael. God's plan was that Isaac should be Abraham's heir and the child of the covenant between Him and Abraham.

MOTHERS

Several passages in the Epistles are directed to women who are mothers. They indicate it is the mother's responsibility:

TO NOURISH AND CHERISH HER CHILDREN:

In Thessalonians, Paul gives a clear picture of Christian motherhood when he states:

> **We behaved gently among you like a devoted mother nursing and cherishing her own children.**

So, being thus tenderly and affectionately desirous of you, we continued to share with you not only God's good news but also our very own selves as well, for you had become so very dear to us. (I Thessalonians 2:7-8, TAB)

Paul compares his ministry to the picture of a godly mother, nourishing, cherishing, lovingly providing for the child.

TO BE THE KEEPER OF THE HOME:

Paul states that women should guide the house and be keepers of the home:

...to be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the Word of God be not blasphemed. (Titus 2:5)

...that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully. (I Timothy 5:14)

Some women have engaged in Christian ministry and left their homes in shambles and their children unguided. In some cases, their children became delinquent and the marriage was destroyed.

These passages indicate the woman is to take responsibility for keeping the home and guiding the household, which includes the children. If you do not do this it results in an opportunity for Satan to take advantage. It also blasphemes rather than honors the Word of God.

This does not mean that Christian women should not engage in ministry. As you learned in Acts and the Epistles, married women had effective ministries in the early Church. But to engage in Christian ministry or any other activity while the home suffers is not God's will.

TO TEACH THEIR CHILDREN THE FAITH:

Paul reminds Timothy that "from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures" (II Timothy 3:15). He praises his mother and grandmother for their faith (II Timothy 1:5). The Christian mother should teach the Word of God to her children. From early childhood, she should instill in them the knowledge of God and His plan for their lives. Her teaching should include discipline to the laws of God and society and honor and respect for parents and others.

WOMEN AND CHILDBEARING

A special passage in Timothy refers to women in relation to child bearing:

For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety. (I Timothy 2:13-15)

We have already discussed these verses in reference to women keeping silent in the Church. Other questions on this passage have usually centered on what it means to be saved through childbearing.

Even though sin first came into the world through a woman, God planned that through a woman should come the Redeemer for the sin of the whole world, Jesus Christ. Through childbearing, salvation came. The whole world (including woman who originally sinned) would be saved because of this childbearing.

Paul emphasizes the role of woman bringing the Redeemer into the world:

But when the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. (Galatians 4:4-5)

When the proper time came, God used a woman to birth the Redeemer who made it possible for mankind to be restored to a right relationship with Him. This is what it means when it says that the woman will be saved through childbearing.

It does not mean that having children saves a woman. Only the born-again experience of repentance and forgiveness of sin does that. Neither does it mean that women who are childless will not be saved.

MISCELLANEOUS REFERENCES

There are some references in the Epistles to miscellaneous categories of women. Paul speaks of silly women:

For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts. (II Timothy 3:6)

The context of this verse indicates he is warning against those who have a form of godliness with no power. They claim to be believers, but do not live a holy life to back up their confession. They target and lead naive women into sin.

Another category of women in the Epistles is the women of faith referred to in Hebrews 11. These include women who received their dead to life (verse 35); Abraham's wife, Sara (11); and

Rahab who saved the spies when they entered the land God had promised them (31). These women are all commended for their belief in God.

Paul mentions women in the travail of childbearing in describing God's judgment upon the world in the final days of time:

> **For when they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. (I Thessalonians 5:3)**

Just as travail of a woman is inescapable in childbearing, so the judgment of God upon a sinful world is inevitable.

DRESS AND DISPOSITION

A final subject in the Epistles which relates to women are comments regarding her dress and disposition (which means behavior and attitude). Paul states:

> **In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold or pearls, or costly array.**
>
> **But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works. (I Timothy 2:9-10)**

Women of Paul's days wore elaborate hair styles. Some braided their hair with gold thread and jewels. Paul is not condemning their appearance, but is stating that women should have proper priorities. Their emphasis should be on good works rather than dress, hair, and style.
Peter also comments on the subject of women's dress and disposition:

> **Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting of the hair, and of wearing gold, or of putting on of apparel.**
>
> **But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. (I Peter 3:3-4)**

This passage clarifies Paul's comments. Peter is not saying braiding hair or wearing gold is wrong any more than he is saying that putting on clothes is wrong, which is mentioned in the same passage. He is stressing that God places more value on the inner adornment of the heart. Women should emphasize spiritual development more than external appearance.

Both Peter and Paul are speaking in terms of priorities rather than legalistic rules which delegate what a woman should wear. The important concepts regarding appearance which Paul and Peter are teaching are:

1. A woman should dress modestly.

2. She should emphasize the spiritual development (the hidden man of the heart) more than exterior adornment (outside appearance).

Consideration must also be given to the general principle Paul teaches in passages where he is dealing with what might be called "questionable practices."

Although God said meat could be eaten with thanksgiving to God for provision (Romans 14), some believers steeped in Jewish tradition were offended when other believers ate meat. They were still abiding by Old Testament dietary laws.

Paul said when he was with these believers, he did not eat meat lest they be offended and not be able to receive his ministry. Women should let this attitude guide their outward appearance and behavior.

Both of the passages you just read state that women should be meek. Some have used these verses against women to keep them in their place, so to speak. But Jesus declared when addressing His male disciples, "blessed are the meek." We cannot regard the quality of meekness mentioned in these passages about women as being only required of female Christians. Men are to demonstrate meekness also.

Proverbs summarizes the whole matter of womens' dress and disposition when it states:

> **Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. (Proverbs 31:30)**

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory.

_____

_____

2. What spiritual benefit of remaining single does Paul mention in I Corinthians 7:35?

_____

3. Read each sentence below. If it is a TRUE statement put the letter T in the blank in front of it. If it is a FALSE statement, put the letter F in the blank.

   a._____Paul believed it was wrong to be married.

   b._____Widows who take a vow to remain single for the service of the Lord should be over 60 years of age.

   c._____If the husband of an unbeliever wants to remain with his wife, she should not let him do so.

   d._____Older Christian women should teach the younger women.

   e._____Submission between a wife and husband is a type of the relationship between Christ and the Church.

   f._____Wives should always submit to their husbands, even when asked to do something morally wrong.

   g._____Both men and women are to submit to one another.

   h._____A woman must have a child in order to be saved by childbearing.

4. List the two main concepts taught by Peter and Paul about the appearance of women.

_____ _____

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

This chapter concludes the study of women in the Epistles.

In Chapter Ten all of the references to women in the Epistles were listed in the "For Further Study" section. If you completed this study then you already have a summary of each passage concerning women in these books.

You may now want to do more intense studies in certain areas of interest to you. If so, select the subject in which you are interested. (For example, you may be interested in studying all the passages on divorce or all the verses about widows).

Review the verse summaries you wrote in Chapter Ten in the "For Further Study" section. Study all the passages about the subject you have chosen. This is a method of Bible study known as the "topical method" because it focuses on what the Bible says about one special topic.

CHAPTER TWELVE

YOUR PLACE IN MINISTRY

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Write the Key Verse from memory.
- Identify the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Recognize that you have one or more spiritual gifts.
- Discover your spiritual gift.

KEY VERSE: (Purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit)

> **For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12)**

INTRODUCTION

While it is interesting to study the position of women in the early Church, there is a greater purpose than study for the sake of factual knowledge. That purpose is to discover your own place of ministry in the Body of Christ.

Each woman has a special ministry in the Church. Spiritual gifts enable women to fulfill this ministry. This subject is so important that an entire course has been devoted to it in the Harvestime International Institute. While we cannot adequately cover in one chapter all the material in the course on the "Ministry Of The Holy Spirit," this lesson will identify the spiritual gifts, help you recognize that you have one or more of these gifts, and help you discover your gift.

THE HOLY SPIRIT

After the resurrection of Christ and prior to His ascension to Heaven, Jesus gave important instructions to His followers:

> **And behold, I send the promise of My Father upon you; but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high. (Luke 24:49)**

The promise to which Jesus was referring was the Holy Spirit. Jesus had spoken of this previously to His followers:

> **And I will pray the Father and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may abide with you for ever;**
>
> **Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth Him; but ye know Him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.**
>
> **I will not leave you comfortless. (John 14:16-18)**

The Holy Spirit would be a comfort, a guiding force, and a teacher. The Holy Spirit would have many functions, the most important of which was to endue them with power to spread the Gospel:

> **But ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me...to the uttermost part of the earth. (Acts 1:8)**

Following Jesus's instructions, the believers waited in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. Read Acts 2 for the account of the initial coming of the Holy Spirit.

THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus left His followers with a commission to extend the Gospel message to the ends of the earth. The power of the Holy Spirit enabled them to fulfill this task. Part of this "power" of the Holy Spirit was special gifts which the Holy Spirit gave believers to equip them to minister to others.

WHAT ARE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

The word "spiritual" means "characterized or controlled by the Holy Spirit." A gift is something freely given from one person to another. A spiritual gift is a supernatural ability given by the Holy Spirit to a believer to minister as part of the Body of Christ.

There is a difference between the gift of the Holy Spirit and gifts of the Holy Spirit. The "gift" of the Holy Spirit occurred at Pentecost (Acts 2) when the Holy Spirit came in answer to the promise of Jesus:

> **And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter...Even the Spirit of truth...(John 14:16-17a)**

The gift of the Holy Spirit has already been given in answer to this promise. Gifts of the Holy Spirit are supernatural abilities given by the Holy Spirit to believers to enable effective ministry:

And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. (Mark 16:20)

GIFTS AND TALENTS

There is a difference between spiritual gifts and natural talents. A talent is a natural ability inherited at birth or developed through training. A spiritual gift is a supernatural ability which does not come by inheritance or training. It is a special ability given by the Holy Spirit to be used for specific spiritual purposes.

It is possible that a natural talent may be sanctioned [approved and blessed] by the Holy Spirit after one becomes a believer. When this occurs the talent then becomes a gift as well as a talent. For example, a person may have a natural talent in administration because of training he has received. After baptism in the Holy Spirit this natural talent may be sanctioned by the Holy Spirit and he may be used in the spiritual gift of administration.

Spiritual gifts provide spiritual capabilities far greater than the finest natural talents. Although you should use all your natural talents for the work of the Lord, you still need spiritual gifts.

PURPOSES OF THE GIFTS

The purposes of the gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed in Ephesians 4:12-15:

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ;

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ:

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. (Ephesians 4:12-15)

According to this passage, the purposes of the Holy Spirit are to:

-Perfect the saints.
-Promote the work of the ministry.
-Edify Christ and the Church.

The objectives or goals of spiritual gifts are that we will:

-Become united in the faith.
-Develop our knowledge of Christ.
-Develop in perfection, with Christ as our model.
-Become stable, not deceived by false doctrines.
-Mature spiritually in Christ.

DISTRIBUTION OF THE GIFTS

Each believer has at least one spiritual gift:

> **As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (I Peter 4:10)**

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

> **But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. (I Corinthians 12:7,11)**

Because every believer has at least one spiritual gift, we each have a responsibility to discover and use our gift. You will not be judged by how many spiritual gifts you have. You will be judged by your faithfulness to use the spiritual gifts you have been given. The parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30 confirms this truth.

There are many spiritual gifts, but no believer has all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit:

> **Are all apostles? are all prophets? Are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?**
>
> **Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? (I Corinthians 12:29-30)**

A person may have more than one gift, but no one has all the gifts of the Spirit. If he did, then he would have no need of others in the Body of Christ.

MANY GIFTS FROM ONE SOURCE

The Bible indicates there are many gifts which come from one source. The source of spiritual gifts is the Holy Spirit. He gives and operates these gifts in the lives of believers:

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. (I Corinthians 12:4-7)

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth on teaching;

Or he that exhorteth on exhortation: he that giveth let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:6-8)

There is one source of spiritual gifts but there are many different gifts. No gift is more important than another. Your position in the Body of Christ is compared to parts of a human body. Just as in the human body, the smaller parts such as the eye have important functions, the seemingly "small" gift is often quite important in the functioning of the church. Some gifts involve greater responsibilities, but no gift is more important than another.

STEWARDS OF GIFTS

You are only a steward of spiritual gifts. A steward is someone who does not own that with which he works. He uses something given to him by another person for the benefit of the person who gave it to him. You are a steward for Jesus Christ:

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. (I Corinthians 4:1)

Part of the mysteries of which you are a steward are spiritual gifts. They are given to you by the Holy Spirit to minister effectively for Jesus:

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (I Peter 4:10)

As a steward, you will be judged on the basis of your faithfulness to use the gifts you are given:

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. (I Corinthians 4:2)

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

The main passages identifying spiritual gifts are Romans 12:1-8, I Corinthians 12:1-31, Ephesians 4:1-16, and I Peter 4:7-11. Remember that these gifts are special abilities from God to minister in different ways. While there may be some evidences of these in all our lives it does not necessarily mean we have a certain gift. For example, all believers are to give to the work of the Lord with tithes and offerings, but the gift of giving is an unusual generosity prompted by the Spirit of God.

For study purposes we have divided the gifts into four major categories:

-Special Gifts -Speaking Gifts -Serving Gifts -Sign Gifts

The Bible does not make such a division of the gifts. We have made it to help you remember the various gifts more easily.

SPECIAL GIFTS:

The first group of spiritual gifts are what we will call special gifts. We use this title for these gifts because each one is a special leadership position in the church. The special leadership gifts are:

Apostles:

An apostle is one who has a special ability to develop new churches in different places and cultures and to oversee a number of churches as a supervisor. Apostle means "a delegate, one sent with full power and authority to act for another." The apostle has a special authority or ability to extend the Gospel throughout the world by developing organized bodies of believers. Modern terms used by the church for an apostle are missionary and church-planter.

Prophets:

There are two prophetic gifts. One is the special gift of being a prophet. The other is the speaking gift of prophecy. In general, prophecy refers to speaking under the special inspiration of God. It is the special ability to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His people through a divinely-anointed utterance. A prophet is a leader in the church as well as having the speaking gift of prophecy.

Evangelists:

An evangelist has a special ability to share the Gospel with non-believers in a way that men and women respond and become responsible members of the Body of Christ. The meaning of the word "evangelist" is "one who brings good news."

Pastors:

Pastors are leaders who assume long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of believers. A pastor spiritually cares for those under his authority, teaching them the Word of God and ministering to their personal and spiritual needs.

Teachers:

Teachers are believers who have the special ability of communicating God's Word effectively in such a way that others learn and apply what is taught. The special gift of being a teacher differs from the speaking gift of teaching just as being a prophet differs from the speaking gift of prophecy. All believers do not have the special gift of teaching or the speaking gift of teaching, but all believers are to be involved in sharing the Gospel (Hebrews 5:12).

SPEAKING GIFTS

Five gifts have been given the title of speaking gifts because they all involve speaking aloud. The speaking gifts are:

Prophecy:

A person with the gift of prophecy speaks by the special inspiration of God to communicate an immediate message to His people. The speaking gift of prophecy alone does not mean you have the special gift of being a prophet. God sets prophets [who also have the gift of prophecy] in special leadership positions in the church. People with the gift of prophecy do not necessarily have the special leadership position of a prophet. They simply deliver special messages under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

Teaching:

As in the example of prophets and prophecy, the speaking gift of teaching does not mean a person has the special gift of being a teacher. God sets teachers [who also have the gift of teaching] in special leadership positions in the church. The speaking gift of teaching involves communicating God's Word but does not necessarily include leadership responsibilities in the Church.

Exhortation:

The gift of exhortation is the ability to draw close to individuals in time of need, counseling them correctly with the Word of God. To "exhort" literally means to call a person aside, to advise, recommend, admonish, encourage, or comfort. Exhortation is the ability to give wise spiritual counsel. People with this gift minister words of comfort, consolation, and encouragement in such a way that others are helped. A modern term for this gift would be the gift of counseling.

Word Of Wisdom:

The word of wisdom is the ability to receive insight as to how knowledge may be applied to specific needs. Given the facts in any situation, a person with this gift knows how to apply the facts to bring a wise solution.

The word of wisdom is a divine insight into people and situations that is not obvious to the average person. This God-given wisdom is combined with an understanding of what to do and how to do it. This gift is not called "the gift of wisdom" because it does not give one the total wisdom of God. It is a word of wisdom, just a portion of God's infinite wisdom. The gift of the word of wisdom does not come through education. Its source is God.

Word Of Knowledge:

The word of knowledge is the ability to understand things which others do not know and cannot comprehend and to share this knowledge with them under the inspiration of the Spirit. Like the word of wisdom, it is not called "the gift of knowledge." It is the gift of the "word of knowledge" because it is only a portion of God's knowledge. The gift of the word of knowledge is revelatory knowledge. It is knowledge revealed by God, not obtained by education or study.

SERVING GIFTS:

There are nine spiritual gifts which we will call the serving gifts. These gifts serve the church by providing structure, organization, and support in both spiritual and practical areas. The serving gifts are:

Discerning Of Spirits:

Discerning of spirits is the ability to evaluate people, doctrines, and situations as to whether they are of God or of Satan. In no way should discerning of spirits be confused with a critical spirit. This gift is a spiritual gift and spiritual things are not discerned with the natural mind.

The gift is limited to the discerning of spirits, it is not just discerning in general. This gift serves the church by identifying people who would split the fellowship with wrong motives, doctrines, and attitudes.

Leadership:

The spiritual gift of leadership is the ability to set goals in accord with God's purpose and to communicate these goals to others. A person with this gift motivates and leads others to accomplish these goals for the glory of God.

Leadership is mentioned in Romans 12 and the qualification for this gift is that one leads [rules] with diligence. Diligence means to show constant care and effort to accomplish what is undertaken. It means to be industrious, attentive, and to persevere.

Administration:

The gift of administration is actually called governments in the Bible. A person with the gift of administration has the ability to direct, organize, and make decisions on behalf of others. The meaning of the word administration is similar to the word used for a pilot steering a ship. A similar word is used for both in the Bible.

A person with this gift is responsible for direction and decision making. Like the pilot of a ship he may not be the owner of the boat, but he has been entrusted with the responsibility of directing it on its voyage.

The gifts of leadership and administration both involve organizational skills which result in the accomplishing of spiritual goals. Often a believer will have both the gifts of leadership and administration function together.

If a person has the gift of administration but does not have the gift of leadership, he will need someone with that gift to work with him. A person with the gift of administration has the ability to direct, organize, and make decisions, but without the gift of leadership he does not have the ability to motivate and work with people to achieve goals.

Faith:

A person with the gift of faith has a special ability to believe with supernatural confidence and trust God in difficult circumstances. It is special faith to meet a special need. He knows God is going to do the impossible. He exercises this faith even when other believers do not believe.

The Bible teaches that each person has a certain amount of faith given to him as a gift of God (Romans 12:3b). It also teaches that we are saved through faith (Ephesians 2:8). But the gift of faith is an unusual ability to believe God in every area of life. This faith knows no impossibilities and puts no limits on what God can do.

Giving:

A person with the gift of giving has a special ability to give material goods and financial resources to the work of the Lord. The gift of giving also includes the giving of time, strength, and talents to the work of the Lord.

Helps:

A person with the gift of helps has the ability to assist others in the work of the Lord, enabling them to increase the effectiveness of their own spiritual gifts. From custodian to musicians, anything assisting in the operation of a church or a ministry can be considered a gift of helps.

Serving:

The word "ministering" in Romans 12:7 means "serving." Serving differs from helps in that it relieves someone of certain duties. One who serves assumes responsibility for certain tasks to free another to do other things.

Mercy:

Mercy means compassion. A person with the gift of mercy has special compassion on those suffering and an ability to help them.

Hospitality:

The gift of hospitality is a special ability God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to provide food and lodging for those in need.

SIGN GIFTS:

There are four gifts which we call sign gifts because they are supernatural signs of God's power working through believers to confirm His Word. The sign gifts are:

Miracles:

Through a person with the gift of miracles God performs powerful acts which are beyond the possibility of occurring naturally These acts are a sign that God's power is greater than that of Satan, and God receives the glory.

Healing:

A believer with the gifts of healing has the ability to let God's power flow through him to restore health apart from the use of natural methods.

Tongues:

The gift of tongues is the ability to receive and communicate a message from God to His people through a language never learned. "Tongues" means languages. The reason we have called this a sign gift rather than a speaking gift is that the Bible indicates clearly that this gift is given for a sign.

When one speaks in tongues it can be in a language known and recognized by the listeners:

> **Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language...**
>
> **And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying one to another, Behold are not all these which speak Galilaeans?**
>
> **And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born. (Acts 2:6-8)**

It can also be in a language not known to man. This is called speaking in unknown tongues:

> **For he that speaketh in an unknown tongue speaketh not unto men, but unto God; for no man understandeth him; howbeit in the Spirit he speaketh mysteries. (I Corinthians 14:2)**

Speaking in tongues is the physical sign of having been baptized in the Holy Spirit. But this experience of speaking in tongues is different from the gift of tongues. The gift of tongues is the special ability to deliver messages from God to the Church in a language not known by the speaker.

Interpretation Of Tongues:

The gift of interpretation is a special ability to make known in a language understood by the listeners the message spoken in tongues. The interpretation of a message in tongues is given by the Holy Spirit to one with this spiritual gift. It is not interpreted by knowing the language in which the message was given. It is given by revelation from the Holy Spirit.

DISCOVERING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT

If you do not know what spiritual gifts you have, we suggest you obtain the Harvestime International Institute course entitled "The Ministry Of The Holy Spirit." It will take you through the following steps in detail to help you discover your gift(s).

STEP ONE: BE BORN AGAIN.

You must be born again to receive spiritual gifts. They come through the new birth just as natural talents come through natural physical birth:

> **Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. (Acts 2:38)**

STEP TWO: RECEIVE THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Guidelines on how to do this are given in the course on "The Ministry Of The Holy Spirit."

STEP THREE: KNOW THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

If you do not know what spiritual gifts exist, you will not be able to recognize the one(s) God has given you. Review the definitions given in this lesson and/or study further in the course on "The Ministry Of The Holy Spirit."

STEP FOUR: OBSERVE MODELS OF THE GIFTS.

As you are considering what gifts you might have, it is helpful to observe mature models of the various gifts. A mature model is a believer who has been effectively using a gift for an extended period of time.

STEP FIVE: SEEK A SPIRITUAL GIFT.

The Bible tells us to seek spiritual gifts:

> **But covet (desire, seek) earnestly the best gifts...) (I Corinthians 12:31)**

STEP SIX: LAYING ON OF HANDS.

Ask your spiritual leaders to lay hands on you and pray for God to reveal your spiritual gift:

> **Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presybtery. (I Timothy 4:14)**

STEP SEVEN: ANALYZE YOUR SPIRITUAL INTERESTS.

The areas in which you find great joy in serving God are often those for which He has gifted you. You must have a passion or burden for a certain ministry in order to serve God effectively in it.

STEP EIGHT: ANALYSIS BY A CHRISTIAN LEADER.

Have a Christian leader analyze your spiritual abilities. Use the form and instructions in the course on "The Ministry Of The Holy Spirit."

STEP NINE: ANALYZE YOUR PAST CHRISTIAN SERVICE.

Analyze your past Christian service. In what areas of ministry have you served? In what areas were you effective? In which did you experience great joy? In which did your spiritual leader

and/or others notice you were effective?

STEP TEN: COMPLETE THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS QUESTIONNAIRES.

The course on "The Ministry Of The Holy Spirit" includes spiritual gift questionnaires that will help you discover your gift. While it is not necessary to complete this in order to discover your gifts, it is a helpful tool.

STEP ELEVEN: IDENTIFY GIFTS YOU THINK YOU MIGHT HAVE.

Identify the gifts you think you might have based on:

1. The knowledge of the gifts you have obtained through study.
2. What God has revealed to you through prayer.
3. What you have analyzed in yourself.
4. What key Christian leaders have observed in your life.
5. Analysis of your effectiveness in areas of ministry in which you previously served.
6. Completion of the spiritual gift questionnaires.

STEP TWELVE: IDENTIFY SPIRITUAL NEEDS.

Analyze the spiritual needs of your neighborhood, community, and Church. What needs are not being met?

STEP THIRTEEN: FILL A SPIRITUAL NEED.

Compare the list of spiritual needs you have made in "Step Twelve" to the list of gifts you believe God has given you. Identify a spiritual need that corresponds with the gift you believe you have, then make a commitment to fill this need.

STEP FOURTEEN: EVALUATE YOUR MINISTRY.

After serving awhile in this area with your gift, evaluate your ministry. You have discovered and are showing proper stewardship of your spiritual gift when...

-You are fruitful in the area in which you are serving. This means you will see positive results of your ministry.

-When you are fulfilled...You are enjoying your ministry. If you are frustrated, you may be serving in an area for which you are not gifted.

-When the feedback (comments you receive from your spiritual leaders) indicate you are effective in the position in which you are serving.

If the ministry you are filling does not fit your spiritual capabilities and you are ineffective, review your list of possible gifts and ask God to show you another area in which to minister.

Do not be discouraged...It is just as important to know what gifts you do not have as to discover the gift you do have. This prevents you from wasting your life in ineffective ministry. By combining prayer and these practical steps you will soon discover the special place of ministry God has for you.

SELF-TEST

1. Write the Key Verse from memory.

_____

_____

_____

2. List three purposes of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

   (1)_____

   (2)_____

   (3)_____

3. List five objectives of the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

   (1)_____

   (2)_____

   (3)_____

   (4)_____

   (5)_____

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

The following chart provides references to expand your knowledge of how Biblical women were used in special gifts and ministries. The chart not only includes women with spiritual gifts and ministries in the church, but also those used of God in various occupations and as homemakers.

Reference	**Woman**	**Position**
Genesis 24:59; 35:8	Deborah	Nurse
Exodus 1:15-21	Shiphurah and Puah	Midwives who feared God and saved the Hebrew children
Exodus 15:20-21	Miriam	Prophetess; started first women's group
Judges 4:14	Deborah	Prophetess/national leader
I Kings 10:1-13	Queen of Sheba	Administration
II Kings 4:10	Shunemite Woman	Hospitality
II Kings 5	Unnamed Maiden	Personal Evangelism
Proverbs 31:10-31	Virtuous Woman	Wife, homemaker, business woman
Matthew 9:20-22	Unnamed	Demonstrated the gift of faith
II Timothy 1:5	Lois/Eunice	Demonstrated the gift of faith
Luke 2:37-38	Anna	Prophetess-evangelist (preached) Jesus to Jews); intercessor
Luke 8:1-3	Joanna, Susanna, Mary	Gift of helps
Luke 10:40	Martha	Homemaker; hospitality
John 4	Samaritan Woman	Personal evangelism
Acts 1:14; 16:13	Mary, Unnamed women	Intercessors
Acts 9:36-41	Lydia	Businesswoman; ministry to widows
Titus 2:3-4	Older women	Teaching
Romans 16:1-2	Phoebe	Deaconess; minister
Romans 16:3,7	Prisca	Apostolic (fellow worker with Paul, and his was an apostolic ministry)
Romans 16:1-2; Acts 18:26: Philippians 4:3	Various women	Church workers; led home churches

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

CHALLENGES AND DISTINCTIONS

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- List the special distinctions of women in the Bible.
- Recognize the powerful influence of women.
- Accept special Biblical challenges to women.

KEY VERSE:

> **The Lord gives the word of power; the women who bear and publish the news are a great host. (Psalms 68:11, TAB)**

INTRODUCTION

Women hold several special distinctions in the Bible. In this chapter you will learn of these as well as special challenges given by God to women. You will also learn about the power women possess and its positive and negative potentials.

SPECIAL DISTINCTIONS

Women were special participants in the plan of God at key points throughout Biblical history. The Old Testament records the contributions of women like Miriam, Deborah, Ruth, Esther, Abigail, and others. Opportunity to study these and other women is provided in the final chapter of this course.

Women were important in several major events during the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ and the spread of the Gospel. We are interested in these distinctions because they reveal God's plan to include women as ministers of the Gospel message:

MOTHER OF THE MESSIAH:

It was through a woman, Eve, that sin first entered the world. But it was also through a woman, Mary, that redemption came to the world:

> **...And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save his people from their sins. (Matthew 1:21)**

The Gospel message, the Word in the form of Jesus Christ, came to earth through a woman.

FIRST TO PREACH REDEMPTION:

When Jesus was a baby, His parents took Him to the temple to present Him to the Lord for blessing which was the custom of Jewish people. As they presented Jesus to the minister in the temple, he recognized this was the promised Messiah who would save the world from sin. Simeon lifted praise to God:

> **For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people;**
>
> **A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel. (Luke 2:30-32)**

A woman named Anna witnessed this event. The Bible reveals she was a prophetess and a widow who lived in the temple and served God continuously with fasting and prayer (Luke 2:36-37). Anna recognized Jesus as the promised Messiah and was first to share the message of redemption through Christ:

> **And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem. (Luke 2:38)**

Woman was instrumental in the original sin of mankind. Now she was instrumental in the plan for redemption from sin. Anna became the first Gospel preacher to the Jews.

FIRST TO RECEIVE THE REVELATION OF THE MESSIAH:

The first time Jesus acknowledged He was the Messiah it was to a woman. Jesus was passing through Samaria enroute to Galilee. While His disciples went to purchase food, Jesus rested by a well near Sychar in Samaria.

A Samaritan woman came to draw water and Jesus talked with her. Their conversation is recorded in John 4. During the discussion, Jesus acknowledged for the first time that He was the Messiah:

> **The woman saith unto him, I know that Messias cometh which is called Christ; when he is come, he will tell us all things.**
>
> **Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am He. (John 4:25-26)**

FIRST CROSS-CULTURAL EVANGELIST:

To the time of the account in John 4 the ministry of Jesus was not extended beyond the Jewish people. After He revealed Himself to the Samaritan woman, she became the first cross-cultural evangelist of the Gospel. She preached to the Samaritans and many believed on Jesus (John 4:41).

Just as Anna was first to take the message of Jesus to the Jews, the Samaritan woman became the first preacher to the Gentiles. The Samaritan woman was an adulteress. At the time of her meeting with Jesus, she had been married five times and was living with a man who was not her husband. Yet Jesus revealed Himself to her and she ministered to her people.

No matter what your past has been, God wants to reveal Himself to you, change your life, and then use you for His glory. Just like the Samaritan woman, you can find an exciting place of ministry in Christ.

It was not necessary for Jesus to pass through Samaria on His way from Judea to Galilee. In fact, it was out of the way. But there is no place that is out of the way if there is one soul there who needs the Gospel. There is no village too remote, there is no city too far out of the way. You may reach one person there with the Gospel and they can bring revival to an entire community.

It was necessary for Jesus to leave the main road from Judea to Galilee in order to reach this woman. If we are to reach the uttermost parts of the earth with the Gospel, it means some of us will leave the main roads of life. We will have to go out of the way and choose difficult paths.

Through this one woman an entire city was reached with the Gospel. Jesus demonstrated an important principle of evangelism in this encounter: We must reach faithful men and women who will be able to reach their own people with the Gospel:

> **And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also.**
> **(II Timothy 2:2)**

If you train this type of people, they will be able to reach the multitudes.

LAST AT THE CROSS:

The Bible records that the women who dedicated themselves to Jesus during His earthly ministry were last at the cross. When Jesus died:

There were also women looking afar off, among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses and Salome, (who also when he was in Galilee, followed Him and ministered unto Him) and many other women which came up with Him unto Jerusalem. (Mark 15:40-41)

Because of their love for Jesus, these women waited at the cross until His death. Faithful to Him as He entered Jerusalem to the praises of the crowd, they also were faithful at the time of His death.

FIRST AT THE TOMB:

Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses watched to see where Jesus was buried after His body was removed from the cross (Mark 15:47). After resting on the Sabbath, they arose early on the first day of the week and went to anoint the body of Jesus with spices as was the custom. When they arrived at the tomb they discovered Jesus was not there. The women saw two angels who told them:

He is not here, but is risen; remember how he spoke unto you when he was yet in Galilee,

Saying the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. (Luke 24:6-7)

First at the tomb, women were first to receive the revelation of the resurrection of Jesus.

FIRST TO PREACH THE RESURRECTION:

When the women heard this joyous news they:

...returned from the sepulcher and told all these things unto the eleven and to all the rest...

And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not. (Luke 24:9 and 11)

FIRST TO SEE CHRIST:

The first appearance of Christ after His resurrection from the dead was to Mary Magdalene. This story is recorded in John 20:11-18. Afterwards, Mary shared the good news...

...that she had seen the Lord, and that He had spoken these things unto her. (John 20:18)

FIRST EUROPEAN CONVERT:

The First European convert of Paul was a woman named Lydia:

> **And a certain woman named Lydia...heard us; whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. (Acts 16:14)**

POWERFUL INFLUENCE OF WOMEN

In addition to the special ways in which women were used in the plan of God, it is important to recognize their powerful influence and to caution as to the proper use of power. The first major influence of woman was when Eve drew Adam into sin. The first sin illustrates the powerful bond between man and woman which can be used for either good or evil.

For this reason, God commanded Israel not to marry wives who were alien to Him. He warned that these women would have the power to turn their husbands' hearts away from God:

> **Did not Solomon king of Israel sin by these things?...nevertheless even him did outlandish women cause to sin. (Nehemiah 13:26)**

When you studied the Proverbs of Solomon, you found many comments about "strange " women. Solomon had learned, to his sorrow, the powerful influence of an ungodly woman. He follows a similar theme in Ecclesiastes where he refers to ungodly women as having hearts like snares and hands as bands:

> **And I find more bitter than death the woman whose heart is snares and nets and whose hands are bands; whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her. (Ecclesiastes 7:26)**

The Bible reveals that Solomon...

> **...had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart...and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God... (I Kings 11:3-4)**

Samson, a man chosen of God to bring deliverance to the people of Israel, was diverted by the powerful influence of a woman. Read the story of Samson and Delilah recorded in Judges 13-16.

Isaiah records that leadership by ungodly women caused Israel to turn from the right path:

> **...women rule over them, O my people they which lead thee cause thee to err and destroy the way of thy paths. (Isaiah 3:12)**

In the New Testament, it records that devout and honorable Jewish women brought great persecution against the early Church:

> **But the Jews stirred up the devout and honorable women...and raised persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and expelled them out of their coasts. (Acts 13:50)**

The powerful influence of women is not wrong. God gave women their power potential. When used for evil, it is destructive. When used by the Holy Spirit, it is a force that can change the hearts of men and the destiny of entire nations. This is illustrated by the Biblical record of women such as Deborah and Esther.

SPECIAL CHALLENGES TO WOMEN

In view of the powerful influence of women, the Bible has directed special challenges to women.

A CHALLENGE TO DEVOTION:

The first challenge comes through the inspiration of Solomon who was seeking for women truly devoted to God. He writes:

> **..one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found. (Ecclesiastes 7:28)**

What a challenge to be that woman among thousands, a woman whose heart and life is devoted to God!

A CHALLENGE FOR DIRECTION:

God wants women to have direction in life, with divine purpose for living. The Amplified Bible challenges:

> **The Lord gives the word of power; the women who bear and publish the news are a great host. (Psalms 68:11, TAB)**

Many purposes women set for themselves are not eternal. They set goals for marriage, education, and a profession. But when these have been achieved, what remains to give purpose to living?

God challenges women for directed living. Whether they are housewives, students, or professional women, they are to be involved in taking the Gospel to the world. Whether you live in a city, village, or remote tribe, you can be part of this international network of women who have a common goal: Publishing the good news of Jesus Christ.

A CHALLENGE FOR DISCIPLINE:

God spoke to women through Isaiah with a special challenge:

> **Rise up, ye women that are at ease; hear my voice, ye careless daughters; give ear unto my speech. (Isaiah 32:9)**

Read God's entire message in Isaiah 32:10-20. This passage was written at a time when an invading army was about to seize Judah as punishment for their sins, but it is applicable to any women who set their hearts on the world and its pleasures.

The women to whom God spoke were careless and at ease because they had money and happiness. They turned from God to the pleasures of the world. The country and cities in which they lived were to shortly be destroyed, but they were unaware of the impending disaster.

The same challenge flows from God to women today. Many are at ease and have filled their lives with temporal pleasures. They are unaware judgment is coming on the world and that people all around them face a Christless eternity. Christian women live at ease while their nations fall to godless revolutions. They enjoy pleasures of the world while atheists take control of the government. God's message to them is, "Arise"!

Through the Prophet Isaiah, God told the women that their lands, houses, and fields would be destroyed. All that was worldly and temporal, everything they clung to would perish. The only way they could avoid this judgment was to rise up in the name of God, shake themselves from ease, and listen and act upon God's message. Unfortunately, the women of Judah to whom this message was delivered did not obey. Judgment came, and the cities were destroyed as God had warned.

But there was a promise of hope. After the judgment, the Spirit of God would be poured out:

> **Until the Spirit be poured upon us from on high and the wilderness be a fruitful field and the fruitful field be counted for a forest.**
>
> **Then judgment shall dwell in the wilderness and righteousness remain in the fruitful field. (Isaiah 32:15-16)**

Through the power of the Holy Spirit the wasted land would become a fruitful field which would experience such growth that it would become a forest. Although God may chasten, He returns to pour His Spirit on that which He judges. From the wasteland springs an abundant harvest.

If women who are at ease receive this challenge for discipline and listen to the Lord, they will not be chastened. If you recognize your spiritual condition, your preoccupation with the things of the world, and confess your sins, He will forgive you.

But the message extends beyond personal application. Spiritual renewal could have prevented judgment on the entire nation. God spoke to the women of Judah to lead this spiritual renewal. God was saying, "If you women will listen to my warning, rise up and take action, you can prevent judgment upon your nation.."

The call to women goes out throughout the world today..."Rise up, ye women, that are at ease...hear my voice...give ear unto my speech."

-Forsake worldly pleasures!
-Renew yourself spiritually!
-Stir yourselves and your nations so the judgment of God will not fall upon you.

A CHALLENGE FOR DEDICATION:

To rise up and take our rightful position as Godly women requires dedication. Paul presents a challenge to all believers including women. It is a call to dedication:

> **I appeal to you..to make a decisive dedication of your bodies-presenting all your members and faculties-as a living sacrifice, holy, devoted, consecrated and well pleasing to God which is your reasonable, rational, intelligent service and spiritual worship.**
>
> **Do not be conformed to this world-this age, fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs. But be transformed, changed by the entire renewal of your mind, by its new ideals and its new attitude.**
>
> **So that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect in His sight for you. (Romans 12:1-2)**

Dedication to God and discipline to the ways of God results in direction which leads to knowledge of the perfect will of God in your life.

SELF-TEST

1. List four special distinctions of Biblical women discussed in this chapter:

   (1)_____

   (2)_____

   (3)_____

   (4)_____

2. Write the Key Verse from memory:

_____

_____

_____

3. Read each statement. If the statement is TRUE, put the letter T in the blank provided. If it is FALSE, put the letter F in the blank.

   a._____Solomon had many wives who turned his heart from following God.

   b._____Women persecuted the early Church, including Paul and Barnabas.

   c._____The powerful influence of women is from Satan.

   d._____There is nothing Christian women can do about the spiritual condition of their nations.

   e._____Dedication and discipline to God does not necessarily mean you will find direction for your life.

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

A Bible concordance will assist you in additional study on the subject of women. A concordance provides key words used in the Bible and the references where these words are used.

If you have access to a concordance, look up the following words:

Woman
Women
Wives
Wife
Mother
Married
Marriage
Marry
Widow

You will find several Bible references listed for each word. Look up the references to continue studying what the Bible teaches about women.

If you do not have a concordance available, underline each reference to women in your Bible as you read through it. Eventually you will have every reference to women marked in your Bible.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

MINISTRY TO WOMEN

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

-Write the Key Verses from memory.
-Organize a ministry to women.
-Identify the needs of women.

KEY VERSE:

> **...Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancers.**
>
> **And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously. (Exodus 15:20-21)**

INTRODUCTION

In each study manual of Harvestime International Institute we provide brief guidelines on how to use the materials in a group setting. Turn to the front of this book and you will find these instructions. These guidelines will help you communicate to others what you have learned.

As you studied this course, however, you may have felt a special call to minister to women. This chapter provides guidelines on how to start a ministry to women. It includes suggestions for organizing and advertising your group and instructions on identifying women's unique spiritual needs.

IS A WOMEN'S MINISTRY SCRIPTURAL?

The first womens' group was organized by Miriam, the sister of Moses. It is recorded that:

> **...Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancers.**
>
> **And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously... (Exodus 15:20-21)**

Miriam organized women for the purpose of praising and glorifying God.

In the New Testament it is recorded in Acts 9:36-41 that Dorcas had a ministry to widow women. Older Christian women are instructed by Paul to teach the younger women (Titus 2:3-4). From these examples we find that ministry to women is scriptural.

WHY A MINISTRY TO WOMEN?

Here are some reasons why ministry to women is important:

WOMEN NEED THE GOSPEL:

At the present time, women account for half of the total world population. They need to hear the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ.

WOMEN HAVE SPECIAL PROBLEMS:

Women of all nations have spiritual, physical, and emotional needs. They have problems, challenges and needs quite different from those of men. Women need to know that there are solutions to their problems in Jesus Christ.

WOMEN NEED TO GROW SPIRITUALLY:

Women need to develop devotion, dedication, discipline, and direction for living.

WOMEN HAVE A SPECIAL PLACE IN GOD'S PLAN:

They need to understand their potential, purpose, and place of ministry in the Body of Christ.

HOW TO START A MINISTRY TO WOMEN

Here are seven steps to help you start a ministry to women:

STEP ONE:

Begin to pray for direction from God and for the women of your area.

STEP TWO:

Call together a small group of Christian women to assist in organizing the ministry. Seek out those whose hearts God has touched with similar spiritual vision and purpose. Begin to pray together for women in your community.

STEP THREE:

During these prayer sessions ask the Lord to help you identify the purpose for your womens' ministry. Your "statement of purpose" should answer the questions "Why do we exist? What is it God wants us to accomplish through us?"

It is important to determine this purpose because the Bible indicates, "Where there is no vision, the people perish." Just as individuals need a purpose for living, a group needs a purpose for existence.

There are many different purposes for which a women's ministry may be established. A group may have one or several of the following purposes:

Prayer: You can meet together to pray for your community, your nation, your leaders, and the world. Through prayer you can effectively penetrate every region of the world and become the undergirding force behind those on the forefront of evangelism.

Bible study: The purpose of your group may be to study God's Word together with the goal of leading women to spiritual maturity.

Evangelism: Your purpose may be to reach your community, city, or village with the Gospel through various evangelical outreaches.

Ministry to younger women: You may adopt the Biblical principle of the older Christian women teaching the younger. If so, your statement of purpose is already written for you in Titus 2:3-4.

Special group ministry: You may minister to special groups of women, i.e., unwed mothers, women on drugs, alcoholics, prison inmates, children, juvenile delinquents, women on college campuses in your city, or women in rest homes and hospitals. You may feel called to minister to women in certain geographical areas or depressed regions, i.e., in economically deprived areas.

Special group ministries provide unlimited possibilities of purpose for a women's group. Analyze your area. What spiritually needy groups are not being reached? This may be the special challenge God has for you.

Church auxiliary: You may organize a women's group as an auxiliary of your church. Your purpose would be to provide support for the various programs of the church.

Missionary auxiliary: The purpose of this group would be to provide prayer financial, and material assistance to missionaries.

World Christians: The purpose of this group would be to focus attention, prayer, and action on the global cause of reaching the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

STEP FOUR:

Set the date, time, and place for the first meeting.

STEP FIVE:

Advertise your womens' group to let women of your community know about the date, time, place, and purpose of your meetings. Whether your advertising plan is as simple as word of mouth in a village or a complex advertising campaign in the city, you must get the message out. As the New Testament commands, "Go out in the highways and byways, and compel them to come in."

The following are suggestions for advertising your group. The ideas you use will depend on your geographic location and the funds available for advertising:

1. Obtain permission from your pastor to post notices on the church bulletin board and in the adult Sunday School classrooms.

2. Ask the pastor to announce the meeting from the pulpit the Sunday immediately prior to each meeting.

3. Ask your pastor to print a notice in the church bulletin if your church publishes one.

4. Take a supply of posters to your local Christian bookstore. Ask the owner to put one on the bulletin board and stack a supply on the counter.

5. If your city has a Chamber of Commerce, ask if they will give a printed announcement (which you will supply) to new residents who stop by to pick up information on the community.

6. Give flyers to women in your neighborhood, church, women's organizations, and at your job.

7. Leave supplies of flyers in Laundromats, markets, and beauty shops...anywhere women frequent. (Be sure to obtain permission of the store management).

8. The public library may have a place for local announcements. If so, keep it supplied.

9. Send a letter of invitation to:
    -Wives of pastors.
    -Lists of names obtained from local women.
    -Leaders of secular women's groups.
    -Lists of women obtained from local churches and denominations.

10. Announce your meetings on radio, television, and in the newspaper, if your area has these available.

STEP SIX:

You are now ready to begin meeting as a womens' group. Here are some suggestions for...

The First Meeting:

1. Obtain the name and address of each person in attendance. This will enable you to contact these women for future meetings.

2. Prior to the meeting, prepare copies of the information on the name and purpose of your group. Distribute and review these during the first meeting.

3. Discuss the plans you have for your group: For example, opportunities for ministry, fellowship, training, etc. Women must recognize the personal spiritual benefits of involvement and be challenged by the plans of the local chapter

4. Provide opportunity for praise and worship, ministry from the Word of God, and prayer for needs of those in attendance. The ministry portion of this first meeting is very important. If women have their spiritual needs met and learn more about God and His Word, they will return for future meetings.

5. Provide flyers or posters to those in attendance along with instructions for telling others about your group. Encourage them to use these materials to invite others to the meetings.

Following Meetings:

Here are suggestions for future meetings:

1. Always welcome and register visitors. Provide them with a copy of the information on the name and purpose of your group.

2. Provide opportunity for praise and worship, ministry from the Word of God, and prayer for needs.

3. You may want to begin studying this course on "Women, A Biblical Profile." You may also want to use some of the other courses offered by Harvestime International Institute.

STEP SEVEN:

Contact all those who attended the first meeting with either a card, telephone call, or visit prior to the next meeting. This practice should be maintained for all visitors present in future meetings. Encourage them to return and become a regular part of your group.

GROUP ANALYSIS

Consider these questions: What type of women are in your group? What are their special needs? You need to know this if you are to minister effectively to them.

Marital Status: What is the marital/family status of women in your group? This is important as the needs of each are different. For example, a single woman may experience loneliness, while a married woman with children may not have enough time alone. A woman raising children alone has special needs, as does a widow or divorcee. The various marital and family statuses which can be present in your group are as follows:

-Single
-Married without children
-Married with children
-Widowed with children
-Widowed without children
-Divorced and not remarried, raising children alone
-Divorced and not remarried, no children
-Divorced and remarried, no children
-Divorced and remarried, with children

Occupations: Women with different occupations have different needs. The different occupations that may be represented in your group include the following. Note that various occupations may overlap, i.e., a housewife who also works outside the home.

-Student in school
-Women involved in ministry
-Business/professional workers
-Retired women
-Housewives
-Laborers

Residence: Where do your women live? Their environment presents special needs and challenges:

-Cities
-Villages
-Remote areas
-Culturally or financially depressed areas
-Affluent area
-Middle class area

Relationships: Women establish numerous personal relationships. Sometimes they experience relationship problems with:

-Family/husband/children
-Business associates
-Church/ministry contacts
-Friends
-Neighbors

Education: Analyze the educational level of your group. This is important to enable proper presentation of training materials. Their educational level may be:

-Illiterate (no education)
-Primary
-Secondary
-College
-Postgraduate

Needs: The needs of women may be spiritual, physical, emotional, or material. In addition, they may be struggling with special problems, i.e., alcoholism or drug addiction. The following will assist you in identifying the needs of women:

Spiritual needs:
-Salvation
-Sanctification/holiness
-Water baptism
-Baptism of the Holy Spirit
-Healing and deliverance
-Spiritual maturity including gifts of the Spirit, Fruits of the Spirit, knowing the will of God, dealing with life crises, dealing with temptation.

Emotional needs:
-Fear
-Loneliness
-Discouragement
-Bitterness
-Unforgiveness
-Self-concept
-Anger
-Hatred
-Guilt
-Jealousy

Financial needs:
-Insufficient funds to meet basic needs
-Needs employment

Physical needs:
-Illness
-Weight problems
-Appearance problems

Special needs: Special problems in your group include the following:
-Divorce
-Suicide tendencies
-Morality
-Abortion
-Drugs
-Cigarettes
-Alcoholism
-Occult
-Prejudice
-Demon oppression/possession
-Dealing with death

An effective ministry to women will include ministry to and counseling for the needs of its members. Identify the needs of your women and through the anointing of the Holy Spirit reach out in love and compassion to meet those needs.

SELF-TEST

1. Who organized the first women's group recorded in the Bible?

_____

2. Why is it important to have a statement of purpose?

_____

3. List seven steps for starting a ministry to women.

(1)_____

(2)_____

(3)_____

(4)_____

(5)_____

(6)_____

(7)_____

4. Write the Key Verses from memory.

_____

_____

_____

(Answers to tests are provided at the conclusion of the final chapter in this manual.)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

If you are interested in organizing a ministry to women, you may want to start a chapter of Naomi Network. Naomi Network is the womens' auxiliary of Harvestime International Network. You can use the following guidelines to start a local chapter.

THE NAME

The name "Naomi Network" reflects the purpose of this international, interdenominational womens' organization.

NAOMI...

The name "Naomi" is from a leading character in the book of Ruth in the Holy Bible. The name means "pleasant," however, Naomi's life was not always pleasant.

During a severe famine, Naomi, her husband, and their two sons migrated from the family home in Israel to an evil country called Moab. Both sons married women from sinful families. Eventually, both of Naomi's sons and her husband died. One daughter-in-law named Orpha then returned to her own ungodly relatives. Heartbroken and bitter, Naomi told her friends no longer to call her "Naomi" but to call her "Myra," which means "bitter." Her life had ceased to have meaning, purpose, and direction because of her bitter circumstances.

But God moved miraculously to change Naomi's life. He brought her back to her homeland and restored all she had lost. Eventually, Naomi was able to direct her daughter-in-law, Ruth, into the divine plan of God.

All over the world, there are women who need God to change their lives. They are lonely, discouraged, hurt and bitter, without purpose and direction for living. They are seeking more than a women's fellowship or a Bible study group. They need a support group which, through application of the principles taught in God's Word, will help them discover their unique purpose in the plan of God. Naomi Network is targeted to reach the "Myras" of this world, guide them in spiritual restoration of all that has been lost, then train, motivate, and equip them for participation in international spiritual harvest.

NETWORK...

The word "Network" reflects our basic organizational structure. We are women of many cultures, races, and denominations joined together by our commitment to a specific purpose.

OUR PURPOSE

We believe the foundation of successful Christian living rests on the principles of devotion, dedication, discipline, and direction. It is the purpose of this organization to raise up an international network of women who are:

Devoted...to the Word of God in order to understand it personally, apply it practically, and communicate it effectively.

> **Forever, O Lord, your Word is settled in Heaven. (Psalms 119:89)**

The revelation of God in His Word is through people, principles, prophecies and promises. By understanding and practical application, devotion to God's Word can lead to a dedicated, disciplined, and directed life as described in Romans 12:1-2.

Dedicated...to the ways of God, so as to be conformed to the image of Christ and filled with the Holy Spirit.

> **I appeal to you...to make a decisive dedication of your bodies--presenting all your members and faculties--as a living sacrifice, holy, devoted, consecrated and well pleasing to God which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship. (Romans 12:1, TAB)**

Disciplined...in the plan of God with divine purpose and objectives in every area of life and ministry; not conformed to the tradition of the world, but to God's divine pattern.

> **Do not be conformed to this world-this age, fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs. But be transformed, changed by the entire renewal of your mind, by its new ideals and its new attitude.**
> **(Romans 12:2a, TAB)**

Directed...to the will of God as trained and mobilized laborers ministering in the spiritual harvest fields of our world.

> **...so that you may prove what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect in His sight for you. (Romans 12:2b, TAB)**

OUR POSITION

There are great fundamental doctrines of the Bible which unite us together as true believers, for example, the inspiration and truth of the Bible (Psalm 119:89). There is also one major

commitment of purpose, the challenge of the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20). Fundamental doctrines such as these network Naomi Network members together as a powerful spiritual force for God.

In this networking relationship, denominational competition is not permitted. Instead, each woman is united in purpose and spirit in a non-competitive community of believers.

> **But I urge and entreat you...by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in perfect harmony, and full agreement in what you say, and that there be no dissensions or factions or divisions among you; but that you be perfectly united in your common understanding and in your opinions and judgments. (I Corinthians 1:10, TAB)**
>
> **So that there is no division or discord, or lack of adaptation of the parts of the body to each other, but the members all alike have a mutual interest in and care for one another. (I Corinthians 12:25, TAB)**

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Naomi Network is an affiliate ministry of Harvestime International Network with international headquarters located in the United States of America. Affiliate chapters of Naomi Network operate independently within the following organizational guidelines:

The director of a local Naomi Network chapter must:

-Be born again and Spirit-filled.
-Be committed to the organizational purpose and position of Naomi Network.
-Make an annual report to headquarters regarding the activities of the chapter.

Other local chapter officers might include an assistant director, a secretary, treasurer, and leaders of various ministry outreaches.

Chapters should incorporate Harvestime International Institute training materials into their program. This does not mean that these materials must be used in every meeting. A balance can be maintained between guest speakers and other programs as directed by the Holy Spirit. But since the purpose of Naomi Network is to raise up a network of devoted, dedicated, disciplined, and directed women, an organized plan of study is necessary to achieve this goal. Harvestime International Institute materials provides such a plan.

Chapters should provide members with opportunities for ministry both locally and internationally. Naomi Network is not just another Christian women's fellowship or a routine Bible study. Our specific purpose is to direct women to the will of God as trained and mobilized laborers capable of ministering in the spiritual harvest fields of the world.

Meetings should focus on international evangelism:

-Prayer should be offered for specific nations and the attention of membership constantly focused on the need for laborers in the harvest fields of the world.

-Reports should be given on the various local and international ministries in which the chapter is engaged.

-Whether the meeting features a guest speaker, a film, or a lesson from Harvestime International Institute materials, it should always contribute in some way to the stated purposes of Naomi Network.

The local chapter should provide opportunity for the Scriptural practice of older women guiding the younger women: This networking relationship should accomplish the objectives listed in Titus 2:3-5.

Networking relationships should be encouraged: Encourage a networking relationship among your members between scheduled meetings. This can include opportunities for ministry, prayer, study, and fellowship on a personal, intimate basis.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ALL THE WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this chapter you will be able to:

- Continue your own personal study of *"The Biblical Profile Of Women."*

KEY VERSE:

> **Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition...(I Corinthians 10:11)**

INTRODUCTION

In this course, you have studied the role of women from creation through the Church age. The focus has been on the Biblical role of women rather than biographical studies of women. The purpose for this was to help you discover your place in the Body of Christ.

There is much more to learn about your role as a woman through biographical study of Biblical women. To enable your personal study of Biblical women, this chapter provides the name and reference for each woman mentioned in the Bible. We encourage you to continue your study by doing biographical studies on the lives of these women.

BIOGRAPHICAL STUDY

A biography is the story of someone's life. The biographical method of Bible study focuses on the lives of Bible personalities. By studying the lives of Bible characters you can learn from their experiences. The Bible states:

> **Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition. (I Corinthians 10:11)**

Events which happened in the lives of Bible personalities were recorded by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit for your benefit. Their experiences can teach you great spiritual lessons. By observing their failures you can learn of spiritual errors to avoid. By observing their successes you can develop positive spiritual qualities in your own life.

Here is how to do a biographical study:

STEP ONE: SELECT THE WOMAN TO BE STUDIED.

You may choose a woman that is of special interest to you. You might want to choose one from the list in Hebrews 11, Galatians 3:7 or Luke 4:27.

STEP TWO: GATHER THE INFORMATION.

Gather all the information in the Bible about this woman. If you have Bible study books available, use these to locate information on the person you are studying. For example, if you have a concordance you can look up the name of the woman and find a list of all references to her in the Bible.

If you do not have a concordance, then gather references directly from the Bible. Most of the references concerning a selected Bible personality are found within one book or a series of consecutive Bible books. You can also use the list in the "For Further Study" section of this chapter. List all the Bible references about the woman you are studying, then read each passage and study it.

STEP THREE: ANALYZE THE INFORMATION.

The following list identifies some of the information you may gather for a biographical study. The Bible may not give information on all of these items in every biography, but try to include everything it does record about the woman you are studying.

Use the form provided in this chapter to record and analyze the information you gather. Biographical information to obtain includes:

-Name and meaning of name.
-Relatives: Parents, brothers and sisters, ancestors, children.
-Birth: Location, importance of birth, unusual events surrounding birth.
-Childhood and early training.
-Geographical setting: Where does the story of this woman's life occur?
-Friends and associates, personal relationships.
-Occupation or vocation:
    -What position or office did this woman occupy? How did she earn her living?
-Physical description.
-Positive character traits.
-Negative character traits.
-Significant events:
    - First encounter with God
    -Conversion
    -Call to service
-Greatest crisis or turning point in the woman's life:
  For example, Ruth when she chose to follow Naomi.
-Death: When, where, unusual circumstances

STEP FOUR: APPLY WHAT YOU HAVE LEARNED.

Make personal applications from the life of the woman you studied. For example: What were her positive character traits? Ask God to help you develop them in your own life. What were her negative character traits? Do you see any of these in your own life? Ask God to help you overcome them.

Compose one sentence which summarizes the greatest truth you have learned about this woman. For example, a statement about the life of Eve might be "Disobedience always has a penalty."

A FINAL CHALLENGE

With this final challenge, you conclude your study of "Women: A Biblical Profile." We hope you have enjoyed discovering what God says about **you** in His Word. Our prayer is that you will use the knowledge gained by this study to enter your special place of ministry in the Body of Christ. We also hope you will use this manual to communicate what you have learned to other women who may be searching for their own identity in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now...Use the following form and the references in the "For Further Study" section to continue your study.

BIOGRAPHICAL BIBLE STUDY

Step One: Select The Person To Be Studied.

Step Two: Gather The Information.

List the Bible references which record the life of this person:

Step Three: Analyze The Information.

Name and meaning of name:

Relatives: Parents, brothers and sisters, ancestors, children:

Birth: Location, importance of birth, unusual events surrounding birth:

Childhood and early training:

Geographical setting:

Friends and associates, personal relationships:

Occupation or vocation:

Physical description:

Positive character traits:

Negative character traits:

Significant events:

First encounter with God:

Conversion:

Call to service:

Greatest crisis or turning point:

Death:

Step Four: Apply What You Have Learned.

Positive traits I could develop:

Negative traits I should avoid:

The greatest truth I learned from studying this life is....

FOR FURTHER STUDY

ALL THE WOMEN OF THE BIBLE

Where there is more than one woman by the same name, the different women are indicated by numbers, i.e., Miriam 1, Miriam 2, etc.

Abi (Abiah) II Kings 18:2; I Chronicles 2:24

Abigail 1 I Samuel 25:3-42; 27:3; 30:5; II Samuel 2:2; 3:3; I Chronicles 3:1

Abigail 2 II Samuel 17:25; I Chronicles 2:16,17

Abihail 1 I Chronicles 2:29

Abihail 2 II Chronicles 11:18

Abishag I Kings 1:3,15; 2:17,21,22,

Abital II Samuel 3:4; I Chronicles 3:3

Achsah Joshua 15:16, 17; Judges 1:12; I Chronicles 2:49

Adah 1 Genesis 4:19,20,23

Adah 2 Genesis 36:2

Agar Galatians 4:24,25

Ahinoam 1 I Samuel 14:50

Ahinoam 2 I Samuel 25:43; 27:3; 30:5; II Samuel 2:2; 3:2; I Chronicles 3:1

Ablai I Chronicles 2:31

Aholah Ezekiel 23:4,5,36,44

Aholibamah Genesis 36:2, 5, 14, 18, 25

Anna Luke 2:36-38

Anah Genesis 36:2

Apphia Philemon 1:2

Asenath Genesis 41:45, 50; 46:20

Atarah I Chronicles 2:26

Athaliah II Kings 8:26; 11:1-3; 13-20; II Chronicles 22:2,10-12; 23:12,13,21; 24:7

Azubah 1 I Chronicles 2:18, 19

Azubah 2 I Kings 22:42; II Chronicles 20:31

Baara I Chronicles 8:8

Bashemath 1 Genesis 26:34

Bashemath 2 Genesis 36:34

Basmath I Kings 4:15

Bathsheba II Samuel 11:3, 12:24; I Kings 1:11,15,16,28,31; 2:13,18,19; I Chronicles 3:5

Bathshua I Chronicles 3:5

Bernice Acts 25:13, 23; 26:30

Bilhah Genesis 29:29; 30:3-7; 35:22,25; 37:2; 46:25; I Chronicles 7:13

Bithiah I Chronicles 4:18

Chloe I Corinthians 1:11

Claudia II Timothy 4:21

Cozbi Numbers 25:15, 18

Damaris Acts 17:34

Deborah 1 Genesis 35:8

Deborah 2 Judges 4:4,5,9,10,14; 5:1,7,12,15

Delilah Judges 16:4,6,10,12,13,18

Dinah Genesis 30:21; 34:1,3,5,13,25,26; 46:15

Dorcas (Tabitha) Acts 9:36,39

Drusilla Acts 24:24

Eglah II Samuel 3:5; I Chronicles 3:3

Elisabeth Luke 1:5,7,13,24,36,40,41,57

Elisheba Exodus 6:23

Ephah I Chronicles 2:46

Ephratah I Chronicles 2:50; 4:4

Ephrath I Chronicles 2:19

Esther Book of Esther

Eunice II Timothy 1:5

Euodias Philemon 4:2

Eve Genesis 3:20; 4:1; II Corinthians 11:3; I Timothy 2:13

Gomer Hosea 1:3

Hadassah (Esther) Book of Esther

Hagar Genesis 16:1,3,4,8,15,16; 21:9,14,17; 25:12

Haggith II Samuel 3:4; I Kings 1:5; II Kings 2:13; I Chronicles 3:2

Hammoleketh I Chronicles 7:18

Hamutal II Kings 23:31; 24:18; Jeremiah 52:1

Hannah I Samuel 1:2-22; 2:1,21

Hazelelponi I Chronicles 4:3

Helah I Chronicles 4:5,7

Hephzibah II Kings 21:1

Herodias Matthew 14:3,6; Mark 6:17, 19,22; Luke 3:19

Hodesh I Chronicles 8:9

Hodiah I Chronicles 4:19

Hoglah Numbers 26:33, 27:1; 36:11, Joshua 17:13

Huldah II Kings 22:14; II Chronicles 34:22

Hushim I Chronicles 8:8,11

Ichabod`s Mother I Samuel 4:19-22

Iscah Genesis 11:29

Jael Judges 4:17,18, 21, 22; 5:6; 24

Jecholiah II Kings 15:2; II Chronicles 26:3

Jedidah II Kings 22:1

Jehoaddan II Kings 14:2; II Chronicles 25:1

Jehosheba II Kings 11:2

Jehudijah I Chronicles 4:18

Jemima Job 42:14

Jepthath's Daughter Judges 11:34,35,40

Jerioth I Chronicles 2:18

Jerusha II Kings 15:33; II Chronicles 27:1

Jezebel 1 I Kings 16:31; 18:4,13,19; 19:12; 21:5-25; II Kings 9:7,10,22,30,36,37

Jezebel 2 Revelation 2:20

Joanna Luke 8:3; 24:10

Jochebed Exodus 6:20; Numbers 26:59

Judah Jeremiah 3:7,8,10

Judith Genesis 26:34

Julia Romans 16:15

Keren-happuch Job 42:14

Keturah Genesis 25:1,4; I Chronicles 1:32,33

Kezia Job 42:14

Leah Genesis 29:16-32; 30:9-20; 31:4,14,33; 33:1,2,7; 34:1; 35:23,26; 46:15,18; 49:31; Ruth 4:11

Lois II Timothy 1:5

Lo-ruhamah Hosea 1:6,8

Lot's Wife Genesis 19:26; Luke 17:32

Lydia Acts 16:14,20

Maachah 1 Genesis 22:24

Maachah 2 II Samuel 3:3; I Chronicles 3:2

Maachah 3 I Kings 15:2; II Chronicles 11:20-22

Maachah 4 I Kings 15:10,13; II Chronicles 15:16

Maachah 5 I Chronicles 2:48

Maachah 6 I Chronicles 7:15,16

Maachah 7 I Chronicles 8:29; 9:35

Mahalah I Chronicles 7:18

Mahalath 1 Genesis 28:9

Mahalath 2 II Chronicles 11:18

Mahlah Numbers 26:33; 27:1; 36:11; Joshua 17:3

Manoah's Wife Judges 13:2-23

Mara Ruth 1:20

Martha Luke 10:38,40,41; John 11:1,5,9,20,24,30,39

Mary Mother of Jesus Matthew 1:16,18,20; 2:11; 13:55; Mark 6:3; Luke 1:27-56; 2:5,16,19,34; Acts 1:14

Mary Magdalene (2) Matthew 27:56,61; 28:1; Mark 15:40,47; 16:1,9; Luke 8:2; John 19:25; 20:1,11,16,18

Mary of Bethany (3) Mark 14:3-9; Luke 10:39; 42; John 11:1-45; 12:3

Mary 4 Matthew 27:56, 61; 28:1; Mark 15:40,47; 16:1; Luke 24:10; John 19:25

Mary 5 Acts 12:12

Mary 6 Romans 16:6

Matred Genesis 36:39; I Chronicles 1:50

Mehetabel Genesis 36:39; I Chronicles 1:50

Meshullemeth II Kings 21:19

Michaiah II Chronicles 13:2

Michal I Samuel 14:49; II Samuel 3:13,14; 6:16,20,21,23; I Chronicles 15:29

Milcah l Genesis 11:29; 22:20,23,24;15;24;47

Milcah 2 Numbers 26:33; 27:1; 36:11; Joshua 17:3

Miriam 1 Exodus 15:20; 21; Numbers 12:1,4,5,10,15; 20:1; Deuteronomy 24:9; I Chronicles 6:3; Micah 6:4

Miriam 2 I Chronicles 4:17

Naamah l Genesis 4:22

Naamah 2 I Kings 14:21; 31; II Chronicles 12:13

Naarah I Chronicles 4:5,6

Naomi Book of Ruth

Nehushta II Kings 24:8

Noadiah Nehemiah 6:14

Noah Numbers 26:33; 27:1; 36:11; Joshua 17:3

Orpha Ruth 1:4,14

Penninah I Samuel 1:2,4,

Persis Romans 16:12

Panuel Luke 2:36

Phoebe Romans 16:1,2

Pilate's Wife Matthew 27:19

Potiphar's Wife Genesis 39:7,8,9,12,19

Priscilla (Prisca) Acts 18:2,18,26; Romans 16:3; I Corinthians 16:19; II Timothy 4:19

Puah Exodus 1:15

Queen of Sheeba I Kings 10:1,4,10,13; II Chronicles 9:1,3,9,12; Matthew 12:42; Luke 11:31

Rachel Genesis 29:16-31; 30:1-25; 31:4-34; 33:1,2,7; 35:16-25; 46:19-25; Ruth 4:11; I Samuel 10:2; Jeremiah 31:15; Matthew 2:18

Rahab 1 Joshua 2:1,3,6; 17,23,25; Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25

Rahab 2 Matthew 1:5

Rebekah Genesis 22:23; 24; 25; 26; 27; 28; 29:12; 35:8; 49:31; Romans 9:10

Reumah Genesis 22:24

Rhoda Acts 12:13

Rizpah II Samuel 3:17; 21:8,10,11

Ruth Book of Ruth

Salome Matthew 20:20; 27:56; Mark 16:1-8

Samaritan Woman John 4:7-42

Sapphira Acts 5:1

Sarah 1 Genesis 11; 12; 16-18; 20; 21; 23-25; 49:31; Isaiah 51:2; Romans 4:19; 9:9; Hebrews 11:11; I Peter 3:6

Sarah 2 Genesis 46:17; Numbers 26:45; I Chronicles 7:30

Shelomith 1 Leviticus 24:11

Shelomith 2 I Chronicles 3:19

Shelomith 3 II Chronicles 11:2

Sherah I Chronicles 7:24

Shimeath II Kings 12:21; II Chronicles 24:25

Shimrith II Chronicles 24:26

Shiphrah Exodus 1:15

Shomer II Kings 12:21; II Chronicles 24:25

Shunammite II Kings 4:8-37; 8:1-6

Suzana Luke 8:3

Syntyche Philippians 4:2

Syrophoenician Woman Matthew 15:21-28; Mark 7:24-30

Tabitha (Dorcas) Acts 9:36,39

Tahpenes I Kings 11:19,20

Tamar 1 Genesis 38:6,11,l3,24; Ruth 4:12; I Chronicles 2:4

Tamar 2 II Samuel 13:1-32; I Chronicles 3:9

Tamar 3 II Samuel 14:27

Taphath I Kings 4:11

Thamar Matthew 1:3

Timna Genesis 36:12

Tirzah Numbers 26:33; 27:1; 36:11; Joshua 17:3

Tryphena Romans 16:12

Tryphosa Romans 16:12

Vashti Esther 1:9,11,2,15-17,19; 2:1,4,17

Virtuous woman Proverbs 31:10-31

Widow of Zarephath I Kings 17:8-24; Luke 4:25,26

Woman of Endor I Samuel 28:7-25

Woman Patriot of Thebez Judges 9:53

Zebudah II Kings 23:36

Zeresh Esther 5:10; 14; 6:13

Zeruah I Kings 11:26

Zeruiah I Samuel 26:6; II Samuel 2:13,18; 3:39; 8:16; 14:1; 16:9-23; I Kings 1:7; 2:5,22; I Chronicles 2:16; 11:6,39; 18:12,15: 26:28;27:24

Zibiah II Kings l2:1; II Chronicles 24:1

Zillah Genesis 4:19,22,23

Zilpah Genesis 29:24; 30:9,10; 35:26; 37:2; 46:18

Zipporah Exodus 2:21; 4:25; 18:2

ANSWERS TO SELF-TESTS

CHAPTER ONE:

1. The main references are Genesis 2:18 and 21-24. You may have also used Genesis 1:27.
2. Organize cities and communities. Genesis 1:28.
3. Not only physical, but also a spiritual relationship.
4.

Relationship	**Reference**
Love	Ephesians 5:25-26
Companionship	Genesis 2:18
Help meet	Genesis 2:18
Commitment	Genesis 2:24

5. Should be the same one as God being a help meet to His People.
6. So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them. (Genesis 1:27)

CHAPTER TWO:

1. Genesis 3:15
2. And I will put enmity between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. (Genesis 3:15)
3. a. True b. False c. False d. True e. True
4. a. MW Genesis 3:3
   b. MW Genesis 3:7
   c. MW Genesis 3:10
   d. S Genesis 3:15
   e. M Genesis 3:17
   f. W Genesis 3:16

CHAPTER THREE:

1. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. (Proverbs 31:30)
2. Proverbs means "a brief saying instead of many words."
3. The strange woman is the woman apart from God, unholy, unrighteous.
4. The virtuous woman is the woman of God, holy, righteous.
5. If you missed any of these questions, review them in Chapter Three.

a.	S	j.	S
b.	S	k.	S
c.	S	l.	V
d.	S	m.	V
e.	V	n.	S
f.	S	o.	S
g.	S	p.	V
h.	V	q.	V
i.	S	r.	V

CHAPTER FOUR:

1. 3,1,2,6,5,4
2. Compare your list with the purposes listed in Chapter Four.
3. The events of the book of Ruth took place during the period of the Judges.
4. Moab and Bethlehem.
5. The author is unknown.
6. And Ruth said, entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest I will go; and whither thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me and more also if aught but death part thee and me. (Ruth 1:16-17)
7. a. True b. False c. False d. False e. False f. True

CHAPTER FIVE:

1. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed; and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? (Esther 4:14)
2. Check your answer by reading the purposes listed in Chapter Five.
3. 4,1,2,3
4. The author is not known.
5. In the palace at Shushan.

CHAPTER SIX:

1. Whether or not you do the will of the Father.
2. For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in Heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. (Matthew 12:50)
3. 3,7,1,6,5,4,2

CHAPTER SEVEN:

1. And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. (John 21:25)
2. The Lost Coin — Luke 15:8-10
   The Persistent Widow — Luke 18:1-8
   The Ten Virgins — Matthew 25:1-13
   Woman with leaven — Matthew 13:33
3. Peter's mother-in-law — Matthew 8:1-15
   Woman with the issue of blood — Matthew 9:20-22
   Canaanite woman's daughter — Matthew 15:21-28

Deformed woman	Luke 13:11-13
Jarius' daughter	Matthew 9:18-19
Widow's son at Nain	Luke 7:11-15
Brother of Mary and Martha	John 11:1-44

CHAPTER EIGHT:

1. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy. (Acts 2:18)
2. Check your answers by reading through the subheadings in this chapter. These headings list each ministry in which women in Acts participated.
3. a. False b. False c. False d. False

CHAPTER NINE:

1. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the Word. (Acts 8:4)
2. 2,4,5,3,1

CHAPTER TEN:

1. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:28)
2. a. True b. False c. False d. True e. True f. False g. False h. True

CHAPTER ELEVEN:

1. Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (Ephesians 5:21)
2. So that you can serve the Lord without distraction.
3. a. False b. True c. False d. True e. True f. False g. True h. False
4. A woman should be modest in dress and she should emphasize spiritual development more than exterior appearance.

CHAPTER TWELVE:

1. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12)
2. See Ephesians 4:12
   Perfecting of the saints.
   Work of the ministry.
   Edifying the body of Christ.
3. We will:
   Become united in the faith.
   Develop our knowledge of Christ.

Develop in perfection, with Christ as our model.
Become stable, not deceived by false doctrines.
Mature spiritually in Christ.

See Ephesians 4:12-15.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN:

1. Read through the sub-headings in Chapter Thirteen. You could have listed any of these distinctions.
2. The Lord gives the word of power; the women who bear and publish the news are a great host. (Psalms 68:11 The Amplified Bible)
3. a. True b. True c. False d. False e. False

CHAPTER FOURTEEN:

1. Miriam.
2. The group needs a purpose for existence just as people need purpose for living. Purpose answers the questions, "Why do we exist? What is it we want to accomplish?"
3. One: Pray.
   Two: Call together a group of women to assist in organization.
   Three: Establish the purpose of the group.
   Four: Set the organizational structure.
   Five: Set the date, time, and place for the first meeting.
   Six: Advertise the meeting.
   Seven: Contact all those who attend the first meeting.

4. Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dancers. And Miriam answered them, Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously. (Exodus 15:20-21)

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: There is no self-test for this chapter.