

# *Living in the Father's Love*

Leaders' Guide



walking with purpose

THE MODERN WOMAN'S GUIDE TO THE BIBLE

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**INTRODUCTION**

- Leader NOTE We're looking at what kind of father God is by examining the truth of His character each day as well as looking at what He loves and what He hates.
- Leader NOTE We read about a woman who overcame childhood experiences that might have kept her from opening her heart to the love of God.
- Volunteer READ From middle of paragraph 3: "I think that, through many traumas, the Father hid my heart..." to the last sentence.
- Leader NOTE Describe the Catechism Clips.

**DAY ONE GOD IS LOVE**

- Leader SHARE We're going to look at a few scripture passages that point to the fact that God is Love. Please have your Bible handy.
- Bible LOOK UP Have a volunteer look up and read John 4:16 aloud as the other women read along in their Bibles.
- Group SHARE Q1: quick  
Q2 & Q3: Ask women to look at the characteristics of love/God listed in 1 Corinthians 13 and ask which of these they need most at this time in their life. Have these qualities of God always been your understanding of His characteristics? Do you have relationships with people who exemplify these qualities of love?
- Partner UP Q3 Ask group members to turn and share with the woman next to her the qualities and actions of God that you find most difficult or impossible to rely on. Allow 2-3 minutes
- Leader NOTE From "QYH"; "Ask Him for the grace to separate your experiences of faulty human love from your beliefs about God's love."

**DAY TWO GOD IS FAITHFUL**

- Volunteer READ Isaiah 49:13-16, then John 3:16-18
- Group SHARE Q1 & Q2  
Q3: Have women flip to CCC 27 & 30 at end of lesson and underline a few key phrases:  
CCC 27: underline: "Only in God will he find the truth and happiness..." and "For if man exists it is because God has..."  
CCC 30: underline: "...He never ceases to call every man to seek him, so as to find life and happiness."  
Leader ask 2 questions at end of Q3
- Leader NOTE Read "QYH" aloud.

**DAY THREE GOD'S HEART IS REVEALED BY JESUS**

- Leader NOTE Read the second line before Q1: "But the truth is that every gentle quality..." (Jesus) is the reflection of God's glory and the exact imprint of God's very being (Hebrews 1:3)
- Group SHARE Q1, Q2: Volunteer read CCC 29; Leader asks: What gets in the way of our experiencing this "intimate and vital bond"? Q3
- Leader NOTE "QYH" beginning with "Yet God waits for us, and He thirsts for our friendship," "Be assured, He loves you and waits..."

**DAY FOUR GOD LOVES US AND HATES SIN**

- Leader SHARE In the Old Testament, we learn that God will not tolerate sin. But we also know that God loves us. We know this through what we learned on DAY ONE. Read the last paragraph of intro.: "God does not reject us because of sin..."
- Leader ASK Q1 and Q2 (factual)  
Q3 (Group Share)
- Volunteer READ First paragraph under the "QYH" which begins with "God loves you but hates sin..."
- Leader NOTE Sin gets in the way of our living in freedom. It tangles us, enslaves us, keeps us in bondage. God wants to set us free.
- Leader READ Last 4 lines in "QYH" which begins with "Your experience of freedom is directly proportional..."

**DAY FIVE SAINT STORY: Saint Scholastica**

- Leader NOTE Share part of that was most meaningful to you and ask the group to share. As lessons progress, you might not have time.
- Leader ASK Do you share the desires of your heart with God, and believe that He delights in giving you what is best?

**CONCLUSION** Ask a volunteer to read the second to last paragraph starting with "You are the daughter..." and the last paragraph starting with "Your father is going..."

**VERSE STUDY** Explain how the study works and how participants can use the study to delve deeper into the Word.

**RESOLUTIONS & PRAYER REQUESTS**

Leader ASK Look at the resolutions to make into a prayer request or create a personal prayer request. Share that this is our time to commit to growing our personal relationship with Christ.

*After lesson: review self-assessment found in your WWP small group leader workbook.*



(Refer to WWP small group workbook for icebreaker suggestions and review honor code before opening in prayer)

**INTRODUCTION**

- Leader NOTE We're looking at the purpose of our lives collectively and individually, and how to discover our unique calling. We'll also learn that God gives us the free will to choose how we'll respond to our calling/purpose.
- Leader READ Starting at paragraph six, "Can you sense a restlessness in your soul?," and continue reading through the last paragraph.
- Leader NOTE This is HIS story, and He desires to have us share in the purpose. Let's look at Day One.

**DAY ONE THE PURPOSE WE ALL SHARE**

- Group SHARE Q1 (quick)
- Volunteer Read: 2 Corinthians 5:18-19
- Leader NOTE Q2: Our core purpose in life is reconciling others with Him and with each other.
- Partner UP Ask group members to turn to the woman next to them and discuss last sentence in Q2: Are there any relationships in your life in which God is asking you to be a peacemaker? Allow 3-4 minutes
- Group SHARE Q3
- Leader NOTE God's main purpose for you is the same as Paul's. In QYH, read first paragraph from: "Every day,..."
- Volunteer READ Second and third paragraphs in QYH starting with: "To pursue this purpose requires a choice."
- Leader ASK Have participants underline the last few sentences in QYH and ask them to return to them later for personal reflection.

**DAY TWO YOUR UNIQUE PURPOSE**

- Leader READ Starting with fourth sentence, "Your heavenly Father doesn't just look at mankind in general," and finish paragraph. Ask group members to underline "He sees you," and "When He gave out callings and life purposes, He did not skip you."
- Bible Look UP Ask for a volunteer to look up Psalm 139: 13-16 in their Bible and read aloud.
- Leader ASK Q1: How do these verses make you feel? Any insights?
- Volunteer READ Paragraph after Q1 starting with "God's specific plan..."
- Group Share Q2 Spiritual Gifts/Charisms. Ask each question and allow participants chance to answer before moving onto the next one  
Q3: Ask for three volunteers: one to look up each verse in Q3 to read aloud to group. Have group members jot down all of the spiritual gifts as they're read.
- ACTIVITY Pass out index cards and markers to group members and ask each woman to write Ephesians 2:10 on the card. They can insert their own name, for example: "For you, Ali, are his handiwork, ..." Encourage them to take with them and post on a mirror, nightstand, etc.
- Leader READ Beginning with the third line in first paragraph of "QYH": "It's time to step out and live" and have group members underline the first line in the last paragraph: "What is holding you back?"

**DAY THREE HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR CALLING**

- Leader NOTE "Now we've seen how God calls us to His purpose and to a unique purpose. Let's take a look at how we can discover our own calling." Skip to end of Day 3, read QYH, starting with: "There isn't a simple formula "
- Leader READ Return to the beginning of DAY 3 and starting with second line in the introductory paragraph, read "It's important to remember that God doesn't want us to stress out..." Skip to line that begins, "Living a life that says yes to God..."
- Group SHARE Q's 1 and 2 are for personal reflection only  
Q3 (personal) Try to have group members focus on the question at end of Q3 rather than the details of their painful circumstances. Ask "What does God want us to do with the compassion and encouragement He has given us in our times  
of difficulty?" Have someone read 2 Corinthians 1:3-4 aloud if stuck on this question.  
Q4 after women share, Leader say that this is often referred to as our "holy discontent"



#### **DAY FOUR      YOU GET TO DECIDE**

- Leader NOTE      God gives us free will to decide if we're going to step out and make a difference. How will you respond? You get to decide.
- Leader ASK      Q1 and Q2 (quick response)
- Leader READ      Q3, Volunteer read: John 12:24-25
- Group SHARE      Q3 (leader be prepared to share first if needed)
- Partner UP      Ask group members to turn to the woman next to them and review the last two paragraphs after Q3, and then discuss the barriers to saying yes to God, and solutions for overcoming barriers. Allow 4 min. If time, have them share.
- Volunteer READ      Q3 paragraphs 2 and 3
- Leader NOTE      Turn the *Quiet Your Heart* section into a prayer to be prayed together at the end of this lesson.

#### **DAY FIVE      SAINT STORY: Saint Rose Philippine**

- Leader NOTE      Share pieces you enjoyed and ask group to share the same. Ask questions at the end of Saint Story.

CONCLUSION      Ask a volunteer to read the second paragraph starting with "Although God wants us to live with our eyes on eternity..."

Leader ASK      How can we figure out which race is meant for each of us? Here are three ways:

Volunteer 1 READ Fourth paragraph "So reflect on the things..."

Volunteer 2 Read Fifth paragraph "Then take some time..."

Volunteer 3 READ Sixth paragraph "Think about the people..."

#### **RESOLUTIONS & PRAYER REQUESTS**

- Leader ASK      Look at the resolutions to make into a prayer request or create a personal prayer request. Share that this is our time to commit to growing our personal relationship with Christ. Close with QYH from Day 4 formed into a prayer.

*After lesson: review self-assessment found in your WWP small group leader workbook.*



## INTRODUCTION

**Leader NOTE** Ask women to picture the face of Saint Teresa of Calcutta, pulling up a picture on your phone and ask: Reflect on her smile. What emanates from her? Ask how was it possible for her to be this way in the midst of the circumstances in which she worked and lived. We're going to look at what true beauty is through God's eyes.

## DAY ONE THE MOST PRECIOUS PART OF YOU

**Group SHARE** Responses to Q1, Q2 and Q3

**Leader NOTE** "QYH" Highlight the ways our hearts may have hardened and the fact that God can soften our hearts.

## DAY TWO CARE FOR IT WITHOUT OBSESSING ABOUT IT

**Group SHARE** Q1

**Leader READ** Second paragraph after Q1 starting with, "We are to 'regard our bodies as good'..."

**Leader ASK** Q2: What insights do you gain from looking at the time and money you spend on your outer beauty vs Inner beauty

**Group SHARE** Q3

**Leader ASK** Did everyone look up the Dove Ad: The Evolution of Beauty? What did you think about it? And, Do you agree with what Audrey Hepburn said: that the happy girls are the prettiest girls? How can we grow in happiness and contentment?

**Leader NOTE** Point out the parts in Quiet Your Heart that read how the Bible doesn't condemn us for making an effort to look nice, but God says our highest priority should be our inner beauty.

**Volunteer READ** 1 Peter 3:3-4 at the beginning of the Quiet Your Heart section.

## DAY THREE INNER BEAUTY CHECKUP

**Leader NOTE** God wants us to take special care of the state of our hearts. So how can we do that? Let's do an Inner beauty checkup.

**Group SHARE** Q1 Taking a look at these 3 scripture verses as a whole, ask the group members to describe how these verses describe beauty in thought.

Q2 Do the same for Q2, looking at these three scripture verses and how they describe beauty in speech.

What can we learn from these scripture verses that describe beauty in thought and beauty in speech?

**Group SHARE** Q3

**Leader READ** The two paragraphs in QYH that start with, "Without God's help,..." and, "But God wants to go even deeper..."

## DAY FOUR GOD'S DESIRE FOR YOU

**Leader READ** First paragraph starting with, "Throughout history and continuing today, women have been objectified..." and second paragraph, starting with, "God desires you, but not in a sensual way..."

**Leader ASK** Take the time to look at Q1, Q2 and Q3 separately, asking the same question for each scripture verse: How does God relate to you versus our lust-saturated culture's approach?

**Volunteer READ** The paragraph at the Quiet Your Heart section, starting with "As your Heavenly Father looks at you,..."

## DAY FIVE SAINT STORY: Saint Agnes of Rome

**Leader NOTE** Share pieces you enjoyed and ask group to share the same. You may not have time to discuss every week; if you have time, consider discussing the question: *In what way have you experienced the beauty that comes from a mother's love?*

**CONCLUSION** Volunteer reads the first paragraph starting with "A truly beautiful woman radiates love and humility because she..."

**VERSE STUDY** Encourage women to share the verse they selected from Day 3, Q3



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## RESOLUTIONS & PRAYER REQUESTS

**Leader ASK**      Look at the resolutions to make into a prayer request or create a personal prayer request. Share that this is our time to commit to growing our personal relationship with Christ.

Tell participants that after your next session, you will have a Connect Coffee and that this is a perfect opportunity to invite a friend to come with her to meet new women over coffee, watch an inspiring video together and join in an inviting discussion! After the session, email them an invitation copy (found in the promotional tools section of the WWP leader portal).

*After lesson: review self-assessment found in your WWP small group leader workbook.*



**(Review small group honor code before opening group in prayer)**

**INTRODUCTION**

- Leader NOTE We're looking at forgiveness: what it is, how to forgive yourself and how to forgive others.
- Leader READ First paragraph following clip from CCC 2844, Starting with the fourth sentence, "Still Jesus requires forgiveness of us, ..." Ask for four volunteers, each to reach one of the bullet points of what forgiveness is not:
- Volunteers READ Four bullet points of what "Forgiveness is not"
- Volunteer READ Next paragraph following the bullet points, starting with, "Now that we have a sense of what forgiveness is not, let's consider what it is..."
- Volunteer READ Last paragraph in introduction starting with, "Forgiveness is a choice, a decision- and one we may have to make repeatedly..."

**DAY ONE FORGIVEN AS WE FORGIVE**

- Group SHARE Responses to Q1. Have a volunteer read CCC 2838  
Q2
- Leader NOTE Have group members share insights from Fr. Bartunek's commentary from *The Better Part*, circling the word *humility* and underlining the sentences: "Only God can see the whole interior world of a human being; only God can see into the secret recesses of the human heart. And so, only God has the right to pass judgment. "
- Group SHARE Q3 A and B  
Q4
- Leader NOTE Turn the *Quiet Your Heart* section into a prayer to be said at the end of the lesson discussion.

**DAY TWO THE ISSUE OF EXCUSES**

- Leader ASK Ask the group members what stood out to them from C.S. Lewis' "Essay on Forgiveness" excerpt.
- Partner UP Have the group members turn to the woman on her right and discuss Q1, Q2 and Q3. Allow five minutes.
- Leader NOTE Ask group members to underline points from last paragraph: "Refraining from judging and offering forgiveness doesn't mean that we deny reality..." to the end of paragraph.
- Word LOOKUP Leader read aloud sentence near the end of QYH section: "May I be magnanimous with my good opinion instead of being characterized by a critical spirit." Volunteer look up the definition of *magnanimous* on her phone and share.

**DAY THREE THE BATTLE TO FORGIVE**

- Leader NOTE Today we're going to look at forgiveness as a battle and how God wants us to be victorious. We'll have the opportunity to share some personal answers and we'll take a look at Scripture to learn how we can respond.
- Group SHARE Q1 (Personal- allow women to share if they choose to)
- Leader ASK Q2 When we're feeling stuck in this battle, how do these Scripture verses help us respond? What can you glean from these verses? What practical things can and should you do when you are battling to forgive?
- Leader NOTE for Q3, have women flip to CCC 2843 at end of lesson and read aloud while others underline beginning with, "It is there, in fact, 'in the depths of the heart,' that everything is bound and loosed..." Ask the women: What is the incredible experience that happens to a heart that offers itself to the Holy Spirit?
- Volunteer READ Paragraph in the "QYH" section starting with "Don't be discouraged by the long road..."

**DAY FOUR FORGIVING OUR ENEMIES**

- Leader NOTE Summarize Corrie ten Boom article for group if sense that not all have read
- Group SHARE Q1 and Q2  
Q3 (Personal) Pause for silent prayer for all
- Volunteer READ First half of paragraph in QYH, starting with, "Forgiving what feels unforgivable-..." and ending with, "He then is free to heal us, to bring us the freedom we long for."



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#### **DAY FIVE**

#### **SAINT STORY: Saint Maria Goretti**

##### **Leader NOTE**

If you have time, consider discussing question from the end of the story: In what way does our choice to forgive (or not to forgive) affect who we want to be, how we want to live, and how we want to die?

#### **CONCLUSION**

Volunteer READ The first paragraph that starts with “When we fail to forgive, we end up weighed down...”

##### **Leader NOTE**

The prayer written by concentration camp prisoner and note the last sentence starting with, “... in her soul, in the most valuable part of her, she was free.”

#### **VERSE STUDY**

Encourage women to write in Matthew 6:12 if they have not yet done verse study. Direct them to Appendix 2.

#### **RESOLUTIONS & PRAYER REQUESTS**

##### **Leader ASK**

Look at the resolutions to make into a prayer request or create a personal prayer request. Share that this is our time to commit to growing our personal relationship with Christ.

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