



HighQuest

Women of Distinction

I *Knowing Christ Deeply*
Equipping women to walk with God for a lifetime

*His
Ways*

HighQuest

Women of Distinction

His Ways

I *Knowing Christ Deeply*

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www.highquest.info

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ email _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Navigators is an international Christian organization. Our mission is to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ into the nations through spiritual generations of laborers living and discipling among the lost.

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Art work by Kimberly Fiser

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HighQuest: Women of Distinction is a companion series to *HighQuest: Men on a Mission*. The basic skills and issues are the same in each series but the material is designed to be gender specific.

About the Author:

Mary Bennett and her husband have been serving on staff with The Navigators for over 35 years. Mary has also coauthored *Beginning the Walk* published by NavPress, 2005. She lives in Kansas City and is the mother of four grown children.

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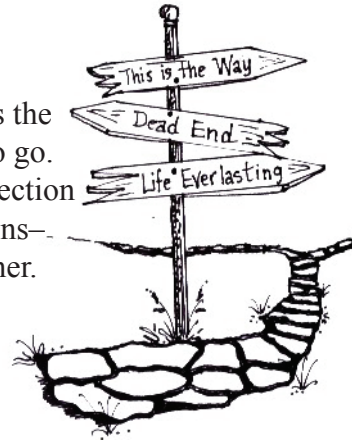
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INTRODUCTION

If you are directionally challenged as I am, nothing raises the heart rate more than being lost with no idea which way to go. Fortunately for me, my husband has a strong sense of direction and that has saved me from many potentially bad situations—especially when we are exploring in the mountains together.

My husband and I are not hikers, but we do enjoy riding All Terrain Vehicles (ATVs) on mountain trails. The panoramic view from the crest of a mountain pass is breathtaking; a view that can never be adequately captured in a photo. Once down the other side the path often leads to a peaceful meadow where we can relax and rest. In contrast to the mountain top where the wind is often cold and howling, the meadow is peaceful and quiet.



Although we love the ride, we never underestimate the possible dangers and the need to choose our paths carefully. Sometimes mountain paths can be very rocky and so narrow there is little room for error. Flowing streams can cause problems as stream beds may be rocky and difficult to traverse. In all of these situations, a map and a compass (or a husband with a good sense of direction) are essential for choosing the right path, negotiating the difficult terrain, and returning safely to civilization.

You may have never ridden an ATV on a mountain trail, but you have experienced times of spiritual refreshment (like the meadow) and times that are challenging (like overcoming difficult mountain terrain).

Throughout his life King David traversed some spiritually mountainous terrain as well. The Psalms tell us of his dependence on God to negotiate those challenges. In Psalm 25:4-5, David prays for the following three essentials for choosing God's path: "Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths, and guide me in your truth..."

First, David recognized his need for God to “show him his ways”. David loved God, but he did not rely on his heart to discern God’s pathway for life. He asked God to “show him”. God will also show us his ways as we meditate on the life of Christ. Jesus is the exact representation of God the Father, and his life demonstrates what it means to live according to the “ways of God”. In this *HighQuest* unit, the introduction for each session gives an example of how Jesus lived life according to God’s way: God’s pathway for life.

Second, David asked God to “teach” him the pathways of God. David was asking for a “road map” so to speak, and our road map is the Word of God. In our daily assignments, we will read and meditate on passages that teach us principles to follow in order to live our lives according to God’s way.

Third, David prayed for guidance. We, of course, have the indwelling Holy Spirit who is our counselor, teacher, and guide: the one who brings clarity and understanding. Much like a compass in the mountains, he warns us when we stray off the correct path and helps us negotiate the boulders that may block the way.

God shows, teaches, and guides us on our spiritual journey, but we also have a role to play to successfully traverse life and live according to God’s way. We must listen: unplug our ears of human ways and understanding and open our hearts to follow his way.

When we listen to the Lord, we will:

Discover the truth about God’s way

Find the strength to follow God’s way

Experience the joy of living God’s way

Welcome to *Women of Distinction: Knowing Christ Deeply: His Ways*

SESSION ONE

LEADER'S GUIDE

Step 1 Get acquainted with the women in your group by filling out the Contact Information Form and Personal Profile Forms for each person in your group (pages 4-6). The *HighQuest* series is most effective with 2-5 women. If you have more than that, we recommend dividing the group.

Step 2 Read together the Introduction to *His Ways* (pages 1-2).

Step 3 Read through Getting Started (pages 7-12).

Step 4 Read through the Learning to Reflect material on page 13. Do the exercise suggested in the material. Notice the same type of questions (who, how, why, when, where, what) are used with a verse in Step 5.

Step 5 As a group work through the Meeting with God Sample #1 (page 14).

READ the verse

REVIEW by reading the suggested summary

REFLECT by reading the list of questions and selecting one to discuss as a group. The answers may be drawn from the context of the verse or from previous knowledge.

RESPOND by writing a short prayer that captures the idea that personally stood out to you from the discussion.

Step 6 Individually work through the Meeting with God sample #2 (page 15). After the women have used the form to READ, REVIEW, REFLECT, and RESPOND on John 4:24, take a few minutes for them to share their reflections from the verse.

Step 7 Two assignments for the next week:

a. During the coming week use the Meeting with God form (page 16) to READ, REVIEW, REFLECT, and RESPOND using John 14:15-18. Be prepared to share your thoughts next week.

b. Prepare your personal Spiritual Journey Timeline on page 17. On the Timeline record significant events that have affected your spiritual journey from childhood to the present. You will share your Timeline in the next session.

(If possible the leader should take 3-5 minutes to share her own Timeline to give the women an example of how to share a Personal Journey Timeline in a clear and concise way.)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____
Email _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____
Email _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____
Email _____

Name _____
Address _____

Phone _____
Email _____

PERSONAL PROFILE

Name _____

Family _____

Birth date _____ Anniversary _____

Places lived _____

Hobbies, interests, employment _____

PERSONAL PROFILE

Name _____

Family _____

Birth date _____ Anniversary _____

Places lived _____

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Family _____

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Family _____

Birth date _____ Anniversary _____

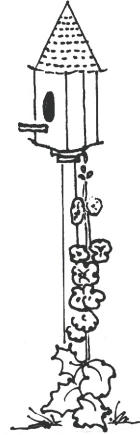
Places lived _____

Hobbies, interests, employment

GETTING STARTED

What is the purpose of the “HighQuest: Women of Distinction” series?

Our purpose is to develop a transforming, life-long relationship with Christ. It is not simply to gain more knowledge but to deepen our relationship by spending time with Christ in his Word.



How do we develop this kind of relationship with Christ?

Our relationship deepens as we sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to what he says.

As Jesus and his disciples were on their way, he came to a village where a woman named Martha opened her home to him. She had a sister called Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet listening to what he said. But Martha was distracted by all the preparations that had to be made. She came to him and asked, "Lord, don't you care that my sister has left me to do the work by myself? Tell her to help me!" "Martha, Martha," the Lord answered, "you are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is needed. Mary has chosen what is better, and it will not be taken away from her (Luke 10:38-42 NIV).

Have you ever thought about what it would be like to sit at the feet of Jesus as Mary did? In a way, Mary was on a quest – a personal, spiritual journey – to become a fully devoted follower of Jesus. She recognized that this quest was the most important thing she could do - worthy of all her attention and allegiance. And how did Jesus' respond to her quest? He was pleased and welcomed her eagerly!

He welcomes us as well, but like Mary we must take the time and initiative to daily sit at his feet, absorbing all he has to give us and then live it out in our daily lives. This will result in our knowing him in a deep and life-changing way, being transformed in our behavior, and changing how we think, feel, and make decisions. Sitting at the feet of Jesus is a life-changing experience, in which we

become *Women of Distinction*, distinctively like Christ and reflecting the light of truth in this dark world. However, developing this life-changing relationship with Christ does not happen automatically. Indifference, sin, distractions, and busyness keep us from pursuing that relationship. We understand that human relationships are never strong or stable without shared communication and experiences. But somehow we don't make the connection that the same principle applies in our relationship with Christ. Knowing him deeply requires honest and consistent dialogue as well as obedience in our lives. And just as with human relationships, this kind of personal relationship with Christ will not happen unless we take the time and effort to intentionally seek it.

That is why the *HighQuest: Women of Distinction* series was written. It is designed to teach us not only how to sit at the feet of Jesus and listen to his words, but it also provides a guided opportunity to actually do it.

Why should we sit at the feet of Jesus?

- Because it pleases him
- Because it is foundational for life-change
- Because it is an important way to feed ourselves spiritually

Let's be honest. Like Martha we are very busy women – distracted by many things. If we are not highly motivated, we are not going to meet with God on a daily basis. It will not happen. We may be satisfied with church attendance and perhaps even doing a little Bible study, but we are not going to take the time and effort to meet with God. That requires a high motivation. Allow me to suggest three reasons why meeting with God daily is important.

1. The major reason is because God wants us to meet with him. Just think about it. The Creator of the universe, our Savior, the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords wants us to spend time with him! How can we possibly refuse him? Mary didn't and Jesus welcomed her.

Think about it from a human perspective. Have you ever tried to get together with a friend and she did not keep the appointment? It happens to everyone at some time, but when your friend consistently refuses to show up, it becomes rude

and aggravating. The Bible says we are “called to have fellowship” with Jesus Christ (I Corinthians 1:9). He wants to meet with us as our loving Lord and Savior. The question is, will we show up or will we disappoint him time after time? Good intentions are not enough; we must make the decision to do it and exercise the self discipline to follow through.

2. Meeting with God is also important because it is foundational for life-change. It is a spiritual habit that develops trust in God and sensitivity to his leading. Just as I cannot trust and follow someone who I do not know well, my ability to obey God and be transformed in mind and heart will only be as deep as my understanding of him – my personal relationship with him. The more I read, reflect, and respond to God’s Word, the more I will recognize and experience his faithful, loving hand in my life and be transformed to be like Christ.

3. Also, when we learn how to read, reflect, and respond to God’s Word, we are learning to take responsibility to feed our souls spiritual food just like we feed our bodies physical food. This is important because many women lack confidence to go directly to the Bible and gain insight for their personal lives. They do not know how to study the Word effectively or rely on the Spirit of God for understanding. Instead they are passive, relying on others to feed them spiritual food. They are much like a child who never learned to use a knife and a fork – relegated to eating Cheerios. However, teach that child to use utensils to feed herself, and all the wonderful varieties of foods are at her disposal. In the same way, give a woman the skills to discover truth for herself, and she will be equipped to “feast” on the Word of God for the rest of her life.

The *HighQuest: Women of Distinction* series develops the spiritual habits women need to explore and gain personal insight from God’s Word. It teaches them how to pick up a “spiritual knife and fork.”

How do we sit at the feet of Jesus?

To answer this question we need to consider two things: 1) how to prepare our hearts for sitting at his feet and 2) how to use our minds to reflect on Scripture.

Both mind and heart need to be fully engaged when we sit at the feet of Jesus. First, our hearts need to be open to hear what the Lord wants for us. This happens when we approach the passage in an attitude of prayer, asking the Spirit of God to not only teach us information but to REVEAL what our hearts need to hear. This attitude of prayer is foundational for everything else. It brings the Word from a place of theoretical knowledge to a place of new understanding and perspective. It gives the Spirit permission to build faith and give direction, hope, and courage to face life's challenges. It also opens our hearts to reproof and correction when needed (2 Timothy 3:16).

We must not underestimate the power of the Holy Spirit to use God's Word to change our lives. In fact, we should expect that to happen. The Word is described as the sword of the Spirit (Ephesians 6:17) which is further described as living and active (never dull, old fashioned or out of date), sharper than any double-edged sword (very capable of affecting our personal lives), and it penetrates deep to reveal our hidden thoughts and motives (Hebrews 4:12).

If I am struggling to sit at the feet of Jesus and hear his voice, I need to ask myself a question. "Am I asking the Spirit to be my Teacher and Counselor? Am I actively listening to his voice and allowing the Spirit to reveal his truth in a way that is much more than academic in nature?" In other words, am I approaching the Scripture passage with an attitude of prayer?

Second, we need to engage our minds in the process of reflection. We do this by utilizing some simple methods for sitting at the feet of Jesus. We call these simple methods spiritual disciplines, practices, or habits. Whatever you call them, the meaning is the same. Spiritual disciplines are simply what we do so God can do what we can't do. Cooperation with God is the key to spiritual growth because with all that God promises to do, there are actions required of us. We have a responsibility to do our part while waiting on God for him to do his.

Using an educational model, a teacher does not write the assigned essay for her students, but she does teach them how to write it. In much the same way, we will not "hear" the voice of Jesus without first learning spiritual disciplines including how to read, review, reflect, and respond to what he has said in his Word. The

Women of Distinction series teaches us how to do those 4 things in the Track I Knowing Christ Deeply books: *His Works and His Ways*. Other spiritual practices are taught in Tracks II and III. Refer to the Appendix for specifics.

MEETING WITH GOD PAGE

“Meeting with God” is simply a regular, daily time when we relate to God through his Word and prayer. It is the foundation for “Knowing Christ Deeply.” The *HighQuest* series provides a simple plan that is an effective outline for the time spent with him.

READ to discover what it says.

Each week you will be focusing on one theme. Read the given passage over several times asking God to give you understanding and insight.

REVIEW to summarize what it says.

Write a summary of the main idea of the passage. Capture what God is saying to you as you read the passage.

REFLECT to discover what it means.

Reflection is a synonym for meditation. Our culture has distorted the meaning of meditation so much that many are afraid of it. From a biblical viewpoint meditation simply means thinking about what a passage says, what it means, and how we can apply it to our lives.

One of the best ways to reflect on the Scripture is to ask “who, how, why, when, where, and what” type questions. Questions act like door-openers to bring understanding to a passage. For example, insight can be gained by asking questions such as:

How does this happen? Why does this happen? When and where does it happen? What would keep this from happening?

If you are not accustomed to asking questions, you may find it awkward or difficult at first. Be patient and give yourself time to learn this skill. The joy of

spiritually feeding yourself on God's Word will make the effort very worthwhile. Others who have found asking questions and reflecting on Scripture to be a challenge, have described the process as very "mechanical" at first but eventually a "delight to the soul".

In the "reflect section" of the Meeting with God page, space is provided to write down a few "who, how, why, when, where, what" questions from which you can choose one or two to thoughtfully answer based on the passage (or previous knowledge). Write your answer in as clear and concise way as possible.

Avoid trying to give a theological treatise regarding the verses you are reading. This is not intended to be an in-depth Bible study but rather a time of sitting at the feet of Jesus, reflecting on his Word, and allowing the Spirit to teach and guide in the reflecting process.

RESPOND by writing out a prayer expressing what you just learned. There are many ways to respond to God's Word in prayer. You may thank the Lord for something revealed about himself from this passage. Perhaps you need to confess a sin or pray for guidance or wisdom. Or you may want to pray specifically for someone else. At the end of the week, your application page may reflect some of what you have prayed each day.

What is the content of the "HighQuest: Women of Distinction" series?

There are six books in the *Women of Distinction* series and they are divided into three tracks or major themes: Track I is **Knowing Christ Deeply**, Track II is **Reflecting Christ Daily**, and Track III is **Sharing Christ Naturally**. These three themes are foundational and necessary for living the Christian life.

Each track has two books and each book has its own specific life-theme. The life-theme provides the focus for all the Meeting with God passages in a particular book. Refer to the Appendix for specific details.

LEARNING TO REFLECT

Reflecting on God's Word is not nearly as difficult as it may seem. The following exercise will show you how easy and fun it really is and all you need is a soda can (or another object) and a sheet of paper to write on.

INSTRUCTIONS: Place a soda can in the center of your group. With one woman acting as secretary, brainstorm and record all the "who, how, why, when, where, what" type questions regarding the soda can that the group can think of. For example, "What does it taste like? Why is it called...? Is the can empty and if so, who drank it? How many calories does it have?" Etc.

After 1-2 minutes (a sheet of paper fills up quickly), the secretary should read back all the questions the group has asked.

CONGRATULATIONS! Your group has just begun the first step of reflecting... using a soda can! If you chose to actually answer some of those questions, you would complete the process of reflection.

Do you see how easy and fun this is? Now apply the same process and reflect on the verse in Step 5.

MEETING WITH GOD SAMPLE #1

READ: **John 8:12**

When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

REVIEW *what it says* Briefly summarize the content of this verse. For example...

Jesus says he is the light of the world and we must follow him or we will live in darkness.

REFLECT *what it means* ...by asking questions such as

- *In what way is Jesus the light of the world?*
- *What does light do?*
- *Why is it important?*
- *Is Jesus the ONLY light?*
- *How would you describe walking in darkness?*
- *How does a person follow Jesus?*
- *What would my life look like if I followed him?*
- *Why would I not want to follow him?*
- *When would a person choose to "walk in darkness"?*

Choose ONE question and answer it as a group.

RESPOND *personally*

Write out a prayer that expresses your response to what Jesus has said to you.

MEETING WITH GOD SAMPLE #2

READ **John 4:24**

I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life..

REVIEW what it says. (Briefly summarize the content of this verse.)

REFLECT what it means (Write down FOUR “who, how, why, when, where, what” questions and choose ONE to answer.)

RESPOND personally (...in a prayer. You may thank God for something he revealed about himself, confess a sin, pray for guidance or specifically for someone else.)

MEETING WITH GOD ASSIGNMENT

READ **John 14:15-19**

If you love me, you will obey what I command. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever -- the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him for he lives with you and will be in you. I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you.

REVIEW what it says. (Write a brief summary.)

REFLECT what it means. (Write down “who, why, when, where, and what” questions and choose one or two to answer this week.)

RESPOND personally (Write a prayer. You may thank God for something he revealed about himself. Perhaps you need to confess a sin or pray for guidance or wisdom.)

Discussion Notes

(An opportunity to take notes from the group discussion.)

YOUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY TIMELINE

Encouraging Events

Challenging Events

Childhood

Teenage Years

Adult Years

SESSION TWO

LEADER'S GUIDE

Step 1 Share prayer requests and support one another in prayer.

Step 2 Ask each woman to share her Spiritual Journey Timeline – being careful to keep the sharing within a reasonable amount of time. Some may need to wait until the next week to share.

Step 3 Share reflections from the Meeting with God assignment on page 16 using John 14:15-18.

Step 4 Read and discuss the practical helps for doing *Women of Distinction* (pages 19-20) – especially as they apply to any difficulties the women experienced when reflecting on John 14:15-18.

Step 5 Read the instructions for doing the Summary and Application to be completed on Day 6 of each week (page 20). Your group may want to suggest possible applications from the John 14:15-18 passage.

Step 6 Read the suggestions for developing an encouraging group experience (page 21).

Step 7 Assignment: During the following week, meet with God using Session 3: *Choices: God's Pathway to Destiny*. Particularly note the questions on page 24 to help keep the focus on the topic.

PRACTICAL HELPS

Make it doable for you

It is very helpful to have a consistent time each day. There is no right or wrong time, but there is a time that is best for you. It may be early in the morning before anyone else is up; it may be when children are taking naps or away at school; it may be in the evening. The length of time is not as important as being consistent. *Women of Distinction* is designed to take about 15-20 minutes a day for 6 days and then meet as a group on the 7th day.

A consistent place is also helpful. It should be a place where you can be as free of distractions as possible. It may be a favorite chair or a special room. It is often helpful to have your Bible and *Women of Distinction* book sitting out available so you will not waste precious time looking for them.

For mothers with young children, flexibility is often required because children do not always conform to our schedules. However, be as consistent as possible. When children are old enough, they can learn to give mom 15-20 minutes by herself. A kitchen timer is a great tool for communicating to a child how long 15-20 minutes is. After it rings stop what you are doing and reward your child with a few minutes of focused attention. Remember, the Lord knows your situation and he is not trying to put you on a “guilt trip”. He simply loves you dearly and desires to have fellowship with you on a daily basis.

Relax and be patient

Give yourself time to learn how to reflect/meditate on God’s Word. You may have filled in answers for Bible studies before, but *Women of Distinction* is different. It is about spending time with the Lord by reflecting on his Word and praying.

Rely on the Holy Spirit for understanding

Pray for understanding and let the Spirit be your Guide and Teacher. You may not understand EVERYTHING you are reading, but he will help you understand what is IMPORTANT. Also, when you meet with your group, others may be able to help you with your questions.

Recognize you are in a spiritual battle

The last thing Satan wants you to do is to sit at the feet of Jesus. He will do all he can to make it difficult, but James tells us to resist the devil and come near to God (James 4:7-8). We must be determined not to give in to Satan's tactics.

COMPLETING DAY 6 ASSIGNMENT

On the 6th day of the week, you will be completing the Summary and Application page. The summary page provides an opportunity for you to collect your thoughts regarding the topic for that session. You may find it helpful to begin by recording one key thought from each day and then write a summary statement of what you want to remember from that week.

Life-change happens in the application section. Here you will focus on the lesson that God has been speaking to you about during the past week. To assist you in applying the principles of God's Word to your everyday life, it is helpful to use the acronym S.P.E.C.K. Is there a/an...

Sin to avoid?

Promise to claim?

Example to follow?

Command to obey? or

Knowledge about God to believe?

Based on your reflections from the week and your answer to one of the above questions, write how you can integrate this truth into your daily life and thus be obedient to God's Word.

OPTIONAL: PASS-IT-ON

Select one idea from your week and write out how you could share it with another person. The person you share with may be a child or an adult, a Christian or non-believer, a friend or casual acquaintance, a family member or a stranger. It can be anyone you wish to share with. The purpose is to help you become more comfortable sharing what you are learning in a clear and concise way.

Be creative in how you communicate. You may want to draw a simple picture, develop an illustration, write a brief statement, compose a poem, or choose a song ... whatever you wish. Don't forget to include a key verse or short passage regarding this idea and keep it clear and concise. Then pray for an opportunity to casually share it with someone else. You can simply ask someone, "Can I share with you something I have been learning from the Scripture this week?"

DEVELOPING AN ENCOURAGING GROUP EXPERIENCE

The *Women of Distinction* series can be done on an individual basis, but when possible, a group environment of 2-5 women is much more encouraging. Some practical ways to create an encouraging environment are:

1. Take every opportunity to show appreciation and respect for one another.
2. Encourage one another to participate in the discussion. This may mean asking the less verbal member a question such as, "I would really be interested in your thoughts regarding this passage. Would you share them with us?" It may also mean that the more verbal member will need to speak in a more concise manner and even at times refrain from talking to give others the opportunity to share. Also, remember that it is okay to have a few minutes of silence in your discussion because it allows women to think and collect their thoughts.
3. Try to avoid rambling and "rabbit trails". Side issues can always be discussed after the small group meeting as time permits.
4. Agree to keep information confidential so there is a safe environment for everyone to share and be supported by the group.
5. Everyone should make the small group meeting a priority and faithfully attend as much as possible. If a member is not there, she will not only miss the discussion herself, but the group will also miss her contribution.

ASSIGNMENT FOR NEXT WEEK

Now it is time to begin Meeting with God using the weekly sessions in *His Ways*.

The specific life-theme for *His Ways* is to discover the ways (also called pathways) used by the Spirit to shape us into spiritually healthy and fruitful Christians. We, in turn, are responsible for cooperating with the Spirit in this process. It is the way God molds us to become Women of Distinction. We begin this theme in Session 3 with the topic: Our choices are God's pathway to our destiny in life. Keep this topic in mind as you sit at the feet of Jesus and reflect on the passages this week. Pray for insight regarding the significance of our day by day choices and decisions.

Particularly note the questions at the end of each session's introduction. These questions are not intended to limit your thinking regarding the topic – only to stimulate your thinking process as you reflect on the passages.

Quick review

When you meet next week...

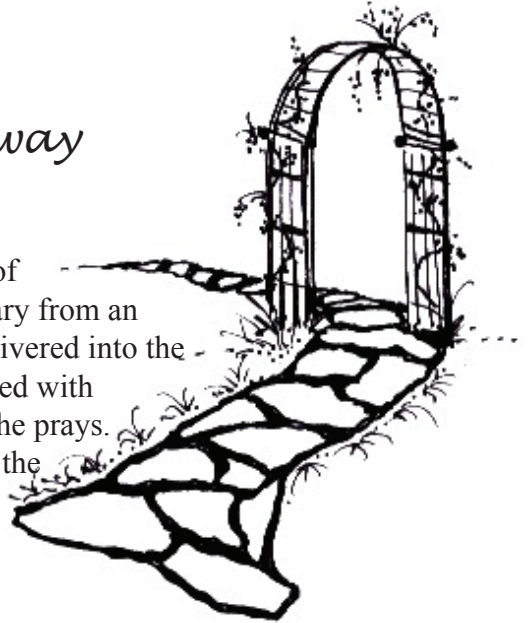
1. Begin by sharing concerns and supporting one another in prayer. There is a page for recording prayer requests at the end of each session.
2. Discuss any questions or thoughts from the introduction to each session and then share your reflections from days 1-5. Notice the space provided at the bottom of each page entitled "Discussion Notes". This space can be used for writing thoughts from the discussion time.
3. Continue to Day 6 and share from the Summary and Application sections and for those who did it, the Pass-it-on section.

Now enjoy your week, sitting at the feet of Jesus using *Women of Distinction: His Ways*.

SESSION THREE

Choices: God's Pathway To Destiny

Jesus and his sleepy disciples enter the Garden of Gethsemane as darkness descends. Though weary from an exhausting day, Jesus knows he will soon be delivered into the hands of the Jews and be crucified. Overwhelmed with sorrow, he asks his friends to keep watch while he prays. He tells them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death (Mark 14:33b New Living Translation).



It wasn't just the anticipation of excruciating pain that triggers this agony, although that would have been bad enough. No, much more troubles him. The holy, sinless Son of God is about to take on himself all the sin and degradation of the world, pay the penalty in full, experience rejection by his heavenly Father, and suffer the torment of hell itself. This premonition causes such agony of spirit that his sweat falls to the ground like great drops of blood (Luke 22:44).

From the beginning Jesus clearly understood his purpose and destiny. He told the disciples repeatedly that he would die, be raised the third day, and save the lost (Luke 18:31-33; Luke 19:10). But now in the Garden, the impact of what he would suffer hit him in full force. Was he still willing to pay such a price to fulfill his divine destiny? What choice would he make?

It's very significant to remember that Jesus did have a CHOICE. Listen carefully to his prayer: "Abba, Father," he cries out, "everything is possible for you. Please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine" (Mark 14:36 NLT). Jesus prays this prayer three times and then he makes his choice...he will obey and do his Father's will. He will fulfill his destiny. When the soldiers come to arrest Jesus, he reiterates that choice. Peter tries to

defend him by cutting off the ear of the high priest's slave. But Jesus tells him to put the sword away and declares, "Don't you realize that I could ask my Father for thousands of angels to protect us, and he would send them instantly? But if I did, how would the Scriptures be fulfilled that describe what must happen now?" (Matthew 26:53–54 NLT). Jesus had a choice and he made it in the Garden. Nothing forced him to go to the cross; he willingly chose to go. That choice determined his destiny, as well as our own.

God sealed our eternal destiny in Christ, but we still have many other daily decisions. Fortunately, we have help. The Bible contains instructions for making wise choices. It also tells about people whose lives were affected by either good or foolish choices. Paul warns us, "Do not be deceived, God cannot be mocked. A man (or woman) reaps what he (or she) sows" (Gal 6:7-8).



As *Women of Distinction*, we want to make choices that align us with our God-given purpose and destiny. By faith let's choose to live our lives HIS WAY. Consider this week how choices – big and small – make a difference. They either lead us toward...or interfere with...the destiny God intends for us.

As you read the passages for this week, consider the following questions:

- What is the significance of each of the "choices" presented in the daily passages?
- What principles can we learn from Esther's choices?

Choices: God's Pathway To Destiny

READ Galatians 6:1-10

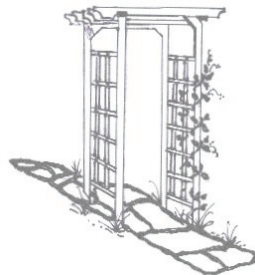
REVIEW what it says

REFLECT what it means

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RESPOND personally

Discussion Notes



Choices: God's Pathway To Destiny

READ Proverbs 4:7-27

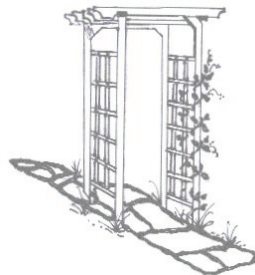
REVIEW what it says

REFLECT what it means

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RESPOND personally

Discussion Notes



Choices: God's Pathway To Destiny

READ 2 Corinthians 5:1-10

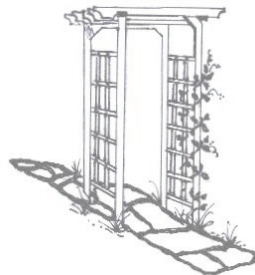
REVIEW what it says

REFLECT what it means

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RESPOND personally

Discussion Notes



Choices: God's Pathway To Destiny

READ Matthew 6:19-24

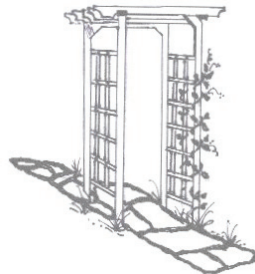
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RESPOND personally

Discussion Notes



Choices: God's Pathway To Destiny

READ Esther 2:17; 3:8-11; 4:1-17; 7:3-10

REVIEW what it says

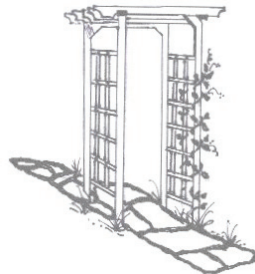
REFLECT what it means

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RESPOND personally



Discussion Notes



SUMMARY

Day 6

What did I learn this week?

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APPLICATION

Day 6

How can I change to be more like Christ? (S.P.E.C.K. p.20)

PASS-IT-ON (p.20)



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