



Preoccupied
with 
Promise



Reclaim the Contagious Joy
You Were Meant to Experience Now



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LEADER'S GUIDE

Introduction to *Leader's Guide*

Don't you just love inviting friends to an event where you know they will have a great time? Where you know there will be wonderful dining and over-the-top party favors? This is the party we are about to have together. I'm confident because I know the host, and it's an understatement to say He has quite a reputation for doing things well. The party is our fellowship together in the group you will lead. The favors are takeaways from a guided discovery of God's Word. What the Holy Spirit will reveal to your heart will be food for the soul. Neither will disappoint.

Everybody, put your hand in. We're breaking as a team for an exciting adventure. This will serve as our pep talk to assist you as you prepare to facilitate the group, outlining what to expect and how to get the most out of the six-week study. Here you'll find suggestions and instructions for you and your participants as well as extra questions, prompts and set-up ideas not mentioned in the participant's workbook (but here for you to bring a little something extra to the table).

Specifically, every week, you will see:

- Opening suggestions addressed to the leader
- Discussion questions for your group members
- Additional action points for the leader to accomplish

It is not necessary, but if you decide to have an introduction meeting before Week One's discussion, (to pass out books, meet members and discuss hopes for the study), we have a few opener questions listed for you prior to Week One. Otherwise, have members complete Week One, prepared to discuss it at the first session. It is up to you, so look over the material and decide what best fits the needs of your group.

Planning Steps:

- Consider asking for support from the leader of your church's women's ministry.
- Talk with the women of your church about the study. Announcements and flyers are helpful, but nothing beats a personal invitation.
- Get prayed up!
- Enlist someone to pray for *you* as you lead this group. I guarantee, someone would love to be this person for you!

To prepare week to week:

- Provide nametags for each member.
- Pray for each member individually by name.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you for the rhythm of this week's discussion...AND THEN TRUST HIM!
- Ask the Holy Spirit for specific ways to encourage the group as a whole, but also individual members—this could make a huge difference for someone to receive a personal word of affirmation.*
- Be diligent to do your homework in the study.*

*** Model dedication in your own study as encouragement to others, and your group will follow suit.**

A few guidelines:

1. Pray before, during, and after the group meeting

Please pray during the week for your group. Prepare your heart to lead. Praise God, confess sin, and ask the Lord to reveal amazing truths to you and the rest of the women. Pray during the group as you lead. During the week, the Holy Spirit may put someone on your heart from the group during the week to pray for, call, or text. This is important to note because this is probably where the bulk of personal prayer requests will rest—after the meeting ends and throughout the week.

2. Start and end on time

This will be one major component to keep attendance up in your group. The women's (and your) time need to be respected. If they sense the group is consistently going over time, or officially getting to the “meat” of the session too late due to extended social time, they will start coming later, or worse, feel like they need to skip altogether. However, we can't have this be all work and no play; you may find a few minutes at the beginning to socialize is what your group needs. Just be very mindful and realize you have some wonderful ground to cover that you don't want them to miss. After all, God has put together your community of ladies for this particular study. How neat is that thought?

3. Be flexible with your outline

Not everyone has to answer every question you pose to the group. You will not have time for everyone to give an answer. You also have the chance to choose from the questions offered as to what you want to cover. You may not even get to all or even most of the questions each week, and that is ok; the Lord is at work! The Holy Spirit knows what needs to be accomplished. Don't feel like you need to interrupt a meaningful discussion just to accomplish the meeting's agenda. Likewise, if someone is dominating, or a subject is taking up too much time, politely say, “Thank you. Does anyone else want to share?” Or, “Would anyone like to comment on another question or topic in the homework?”

4. Stress confidentiality

We want an atmosphere where people feel comfortable to share without feeling like others will talk about it later. “Do unto others, Friends!”

Materials needed:

- Bible
- Workbook
- Pen
- Highlighter

Go over the following **Workbook Details** (explained in the beginning of the workbook) on or before the first meeting:

- Materials needed
- Nightlights
- Engraving Questions

Inform members about the format of the study. It includes six weeks of content, and each week consists of five days of Bible study experience.

Note: The workbook is a six-week study, and this guide is designed for participants to have completed Week One before the first discussion meeting.

Optional Ahead-of-Time Purchases:

For Week 4:

- A stamp that reads “TRUTH” to use for the action lesson: “Stamp It as Truth.” I purchased mine from simplystamps.com and customized the word TRUTH with red ink. You can pass the stamp around at the meeting to have members use on their workbooks.
- Custom stickers and/or prints for decorating the lesson on “Happiness Can be Bought.” Custom stickers or labels that say “Happiness Can Be Bought” with the reference of 1 Peter 1:18-19 underneath the phrase might be a cute addition. There are also several cute prints online (from etsy.com for example) that say the phrase, “Money can’t buy happiness, but it can be bought, which is kinda the same thing.”

Have fun and feel free to get creative with your own ideas to add as props and décor!

Use the questions and ideas below for an optional introduction meeting, or use this guide for the beginning of your Week One meeting.

Group Questions for Introduction Meeting:

Optional icebreaker: When have you had a situation where you were expecting one outcome, but ended up with something entirely different? (In the setting of our theme story with the woman at the well, we find a woman who received the surprise of her life in the middle of her daily routine).

Leader: Read the key verse related to “bubbling within” from John 4:14, NLT.

What do you picture when you hear this description of what Jesus is offering to the woman?

What drew your attention to this study? What do you hope to get out of it?

Note from the author/for leader to share: When my (Courtney’s) son, Hunter, was in Pre-K he said, “I think about God all the time, sometimes even when I’m on the playground.” This is our goal and a major objective for this study—to learn how to habitually ponder God so that a vibrancy in our spirit is a normal occurrence.



Lead Role on a Hollywood Set

Leaders, choose from the questions below and your own notes to plan what you will use for your gathering. God WILL guide your heart!

Group Questions:

Day One—

What stood out to you about this story of the woman at the well? What part of her story was meaningful to you?

Look at the two lists on p. 3. The Samaritan woman was shocked Jesus asked her for a drink, but she was actually about to receive something from Him. What did you list here?

How does the truth of Romans 4:17 offer hope? To the woman at the well? To you?

Day Two—

Leader: Start by sharing your own example and then have group members give a couple examples of movies where they are really pulling for the main character to “know” something. Discuss the point that this is how we are before we become aware of God’s gift to us.

Let’s review the definition of “truth” from John 4:24. According to *The Complete Word Study Dictionary (New Testament)*, one of the Greek translations of the word *truth* used in verse 24 is “unveiled reality.”¹ What would your lifestyle of worship, or life in general, look like if it were lived in “unveiled reality”?

How does this compare to what you wrote yesterday on p. 4 on the doubt or fear you “keep coming back to?”

Day Three—

Give an example of a time in your life when having something to look forward to was really meaningful to you and changed your worldview.

From 1 John, which truth you could “really know” meant the most to you?

In what ways did this bring up a new outlook for you? Can you think of someone who would drastically benefit from this kind of *knowing*? As you silently think about this person, can you also think of how it will change you?

Day Four—

“I would suggest it is perfectly possible for a Christian to be so infiltrated with 20th century thinking that he lives most of his life as if the supernatural were not there.”² What were your thoughts about this quote from Francis Schaeffer?

From p. 18 of our study book, what was it like for you to see your name written with the truth God wants you to fully believe?

Let's talk about your Engraving Question. First of all, what was it like to do this exercise? What feelings did you have? Did you encounter any obstacles?

Would anyone like to share their conclusion statement or Engraving Question?

Leader: Read John 10:10 to the group.

Day Five—

Let's look at our pictures from pp. 23-24. Would anyone like to share a picture with the group? The prompt was to draw what God promises He is doing on my behalf or who He promises He is—even though I may not see it with my physical eyes in my current situation.

¹ Zodhiates, Spiros, ThD., *The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament*. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers) 1993. #225 p.120.

² Francis A. Schaeffer, *True Spirituality* (Carol Stream, Illinois: Tyndale House, 2001), p. 57.



Defensive Strategies for a Well-Accessorized Mind

Optional prop/opener for leader: Discuss the scene in *Serendipity* and/or play the brief scene from the movie. Please note—I do not condone the entire movie content, but this scene is a great stand-alone tool for our lesson. You can find the exact four-minute scene online by searching “YouTube serendipity elevator scene.”

Choose from the questions below and your own notes to plan what you would like to use for this week’s meeting.

Group Questions:

Day One—

Leader: Check in with members to see how the Nightlights are going. Ask if it is helpful to review a little at night.

As you discuss the movie scene, ask the following question: What feelings did that scene stir in you as you thought about Satan detouring you from trying to get to know and understand God?

Leader: Read Ephesians 6:10-18.

Discuss, particularly, the idea of the shield of faith (verse 16) and the size that it was in Paul’s day.

Day Two—

The first interference was distraction. Which Scripture was meaningful to you under this section, and why?

How would you describe the lure of Unbelief?

What is something God showed you under one of the Scriptures regarding belief.

Leader: Mention God’s seriousness of, and His surefire help with, our faith.

Day Three—

Leader: List the three attempts of interference we covered on this day: Being Easily Impressed, Impurity and Unrepentant Sin, and Being Jaded and Cynical

With the idea of Being Easily Impressed, what are some of the lesser things we hold on to?

On the topic of Impurity and Unrepentant Sin, why do you think God wants us to be holy as He is holy?

Describe the trap of living with a jaded and cynical worldview.

What was it like to do the exercise with the song lyrics?

What did you discover?

Day Four—

Which obstacle is at the top of your list to conquer?

What Scripture will you use to combat it?

How do you see the last interference of Repeated, False Thoughts feeding into all of the others?

What comfort did you receive through the verses at the end of Day Four's lesson? What comfort does it give you to know God is a completer? Why is this important to you in your history?

Day Five—

Do you believe feelings can be retraced to thoughts? Give examples.

Leader: Close with reading 2 Corinthians 10:5, Psalm 46:1 and Isaiah 41:10.



Specific Gifts You Can Know

Leader: Please allow the most time for Days Three and Four, as you may need extra time to process emotions while group members work through the promise, “Someone calls me Daughter.”

Prepare by praying specifically over material for these days. We want to be sensitive as we minister to the women’s hearts this week. Pray ahead of time about what you, as a leader, can share from this topic.

Choose from the questions below and your own notes to plan what you would like to use for this week’s meeting.

Group Questions:

Day One—

What did you think of the “coaching the woman at the well” exercise?

What was it like to complete the “thought chain”? So many times this naturally occurs to us in our heads. What was it like to have license to write it down?

Give an example of you would walk the woman at the well through one of her struggled feelings. Would someone like to share and discuss the blanks you filled in for an entire segment (emotion, situation, thought chain, specific thought summary)?

Leader: Read Isaiah 54:17 in light of today’s lesson. Ask your group members to share their insights.

Day Two—

Leader: Remind the group about the differences between positive thinking vs. truth. Discuss the 1st place, 2nd place, 3rd place, and 4th place sections. Ask group members for any additional insight or comments (perhaps from Jessica’s story).

Day Three—

Leader: As you begin today’s lesson, you may even want to mention the tenderness with which you approach the topic. This may set the stage and ease unnecessary anxiety.

I also invite you to pray out loud with the group if you feel led to do so—that the Lord would help the women fully embrace the individual promise we studied today—“Someone calls me Daughter.”

Which attribute of a father figure or other male figure do you desire most—companionship, protection, or exclusive adoration? And what it is about that characteristic that is especially meaningful?

What was it like for you to write out the truth listed in this lesson: “Someone calls me Daughter”?

Which verse is the Lord helping you memorize and hold close to your heart?

Day Four—

Leader: As you continue, perhaps, to share your own hope on this topic, merge your encouragement with a portion of the idea in the extra box entitled, “WHY YOU SHOULD KEEP GOING” at the end of the lesson.

What did you learn about how you view God as you went through today’s lesson?

What feeling did you have as you read the wedding story from today’s text? How does this change how you previously felt the Lord looked at you?

Day Five—

Do you desire to be truly known?

Could you relate to my story about having a heart-to-heart at the fireplace?

Leader: Read Hosea 2:8 sometime during this discussion.

Who is someone you celebrate as having history with over the years? Is it also neat to think God has that place in your life?

Leader: Remind the group that these truths begin to serve as our springboard for the replacement thoughts we struggle with. I’m pumped for us that Jesus gives us so much truth to use here.



Every Girl Loves a S.A.L.E.

Optional prep for leader: Have a centerpiece with giant marshmallows or individual buckets filled with marshmallows to go along with Day Four's lesson on "Happiness can be bought." If you purchased the stickers or prints mentioned at the beginning of the guide, decorate with them this week.

Prepare yourself for the great privilege of sharing the Good News and leading someone to Christ if they are ready. This week, God might give us a gift in this way. How exciting!

Choose from the questions below and your own notes to plan what you would like to use for this week's meeting.

Group Questions:

Day One—

What does it mean for you to STAMP it as Truth? How would you explain this to someone?

Open your Bibles to John 4:46-53. Discuss the story of the government official's faith, by specifically showing: 1.) how he believed and immediately started toward home 2.) the kind of night he must have gone through, and 3.) the kindness of God in sending the messenger!

What is God nudging you to believe?

Leader: Share your answer in order to enhance discussion on this question if needed.

Pass around the red TRUTH stamp if you purchased one. Give each woman the chance to stamp in her workbook what she will believe as absolute truth.

Day Two—

Discuss the statement: "There is no victory where there is no battle" (p. 92).

Recall the story of Courtney's son, Hunter, saying, "Mommy get choo."

From p. 93, what name of God did you decide to put on repeat?

How did your practice go with your own template on p. 94? Share the blanks with members desire and if time allows.

Day Three—

Leader: Read or call on someone to read Daniel 3:16-18.

Note from the author/for leader to share: My (Courtney's) high school Bible teacher, Sandie Montgomery, taught me a truth I will carry with me throughout the rest of my days. She said that as a Christian, "The worst thing that could ever happen to you, can never happen to you." The worst thing ever would be a separation from the love of God. And that can NEVER happen. What a wonderful thought!



Ask the group how this phrase “Even if He does not” can translate into our hardest of situations by helping us see that God is stable and His promises remain in our worst-case scenario? *Because we never have THE worst case scenario.* How does this help us answer this equation/fill out the blanks in situations in our lives?

Would anyone like to read the blanks they filled in for their statement on page 97? Did you feel differently about the situation after you came to the end of the assignment?

Days Four and Five—

Leader: Open with the funny phrase, “Money can’t buy happiness, but it can buy marshmallows, which is kinda the same thing.”

Discuss the idea that “We have to first accept that our happiness is bought; then it can be thought” (p. 104). Use 1 Peter 1:18-19 to guide your discussion.

Give mention to the second action phrase from S.A.L.E. acronym [ASK].

What did we learn about asking?

Give an example of when it mattered to you WHO you were asking.

What did you learn about God in this week’s study, and how does that influence your asking?

Give an example as to when asking (and receiving) was more crucial to you, based on recognition of your own need.

Out of the verses listed detailing salvation on pp. 104-106, discuss which verses made a difference to you.

Leader: Ask members to take turns choosing a verse that is meaningful to them and reading it aloud.

Ask if anyone has specific questions on these last two days of study. Let the women know they can come to you individually if they want to explore or talk about salvation further. Ask if there are women in the group who would also be willing to discuss one-on-one with someone who is interested in talking after the meeting.



Week 5 For You to Experience

Leader: Call or email members to ask them to bring a tangible example from Day Five (p. 133) for a “show and tell” with the group at the next gathering.

Choose from the questions below and your own notes to plan what you would like to use for this week’s meeting.

Group Questions:

Day One—

Share examples of a time when something was important to your heart, and you started to see it everywhere.

What did we learn from the story in 2 Kings 6:8-23?

How could “knowing” the gift and truths of God give us eyes to see across landscape with an entirely new, victorious perspective like Elisha and his servant?

Leader: Discuss how looking in God’s Word is key to seeing God’s movement around us. Again, you start to see what you love...everywhere.

What can we do this week to start making this more of a lifestyle (seeing the God we love everywhere)?

Day Two—

Discuss faith imagination and the quote from Dave Busby on p. 116: “Faith demands a leap that our rational minds cannot make.”

What was it like for you to consider how the Bible stories were true stories, not just fiction scripts—that these things actually happened in real time on a real day (as discussed on pp. 117-118)?

Allow group members to share their Nightlight answers: “In what way have you chosen to ‘Look on Purpose’ in these last couple of days—making a connection with what you read in Scripture and the world around you?”

Days Three and Four—

Recap and list all of the action points in the S.A.L.E. process, adding “Experience it for Yourself.”

What did you think of the science behind how God created our brains for healing?

Discuss what Abba Daddy Experiences are, and have a time of processing and listening to each other’s journaling at the end of today’s lesson.

Day Five—

Leader: Review Joshua 4:19-24.

This was one of the challenges in today's study:

“Go back through some of the Scripture and take a minute to think about what has been meaningful to you so far in the study. What tangible items can you correlate to help you remember and cement your experience?”

Would anyone like to share an item you brought? (if time runs out, allow time next week to continue so everyone has a chance to share).



End with a Twirl

Optional ideas for leader: I like to refer to this section (Days One and Two) as “Christmas and Barnyard Bliss.” You can use this as a prompt for fun decorations and/or snacks. If you are doing this study in the summer, consider a Christmas in July theme night. Or you could have fun with the “twirl” theme we drive home toward the end of this week.

If you ran out of time last week, begin your gathering by having other group members share their tangible items.

You know your group well by now. You’ll notice more space is given in this week’s guide. Take your time and enjoy this conclusion/celebration! Choose from the questions below and your own notes to plan what you would like to use for this week’s meeting.

Group Questions:

Day One—

Do you tend to live like it’s December 23rd or December 26th? Also, discuss the concept of the “residual glitter of heaven” (p. 139).

Recall a time when it mattered that you did or did not have something to look forward to.

What do we have to look forward to, according to Scripture?

Leader: Read or call on someone to read Luke 2:19. Point out how this is the attitude/habit we can have about pondering God and His presence in our lives.

Day Two—

What were the four words pertaining to the Lord that served as a total game changer to the people of Haggai? (Haggai 1:13, p. 145)

What did that do to the people? (Haggai 1:14)

Did today’s lesson stir something in you? If so, explain it to the group.

Consider these two questions from page 147:

How does this promise from Haggai 2:19 encourage us as we journey through taking God’s promises from head knowledge to heart knowledge?

What promise from God’s Word can you apply to your own “pomegranate seed” in your life as you consider Haggai 2:19?

Day Three—

Recall the quote: “Life is not a dress rehearsal!”

Which part of the review was helpful to you?

Day Four—

What thoughts do you have from the Psalm 91 passage we studied in Day Four?

Day Five—

What are your thoughts about the role of oxytocin—its benefits not only for you but also for the way you can interact with people around you?

Note from the author/for leader to share (if time allows): Paisley slept so well in her crib that Josh and I (Courtney) waited until she was three years old to graduate her to a big girl bed. This was a shining era for her. One day we were in a clothing store and she struck up a conversation with the saleswoman. After she said hello, Paisley asked the woman, “Do you like to, um.....um.....sleep at night?” I instantly knew her hilarious angle. She wanted to talk about the bed and was trying any way she could to get someone to ask her about it, to weave it in to “everyday” conversation. Just like when we start to see what we love everywhere, we want to talk about it. “A good man produces good out of the good storeroom of his heart. An evil man produces evil out of the evil storeroom, for his mouth speaks from the overflow of the heart” (Luke 6:45).

Ask members to share their main takeaways from the study. Celebrate!

Conclude with reading 2 Peter 1:3-7 (any version).

Celebrating along with you,

Courtney