

**Discussion Questions &
Bible Study Tips**

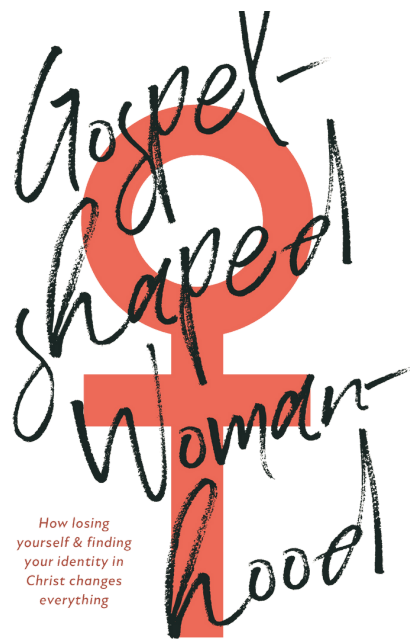


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Tips for Bible study leaders



1. Advertise well. Include: the book, where to order it, starting date, location, how many weeks you plan to meet, how long each meeting will last, etc.
2. Get the book and read ahead a bit. This gives you some margin if life gets busy once the group has already started meeting. If discussion questions are provided for each chapter, write out the answers to those ahead of time.
3. Include some community-building time (if you can't do this every week, at least prioritise it on the first and last weeks). Snacks, coffee, and tea help!
4. Make a list of all members and their phone numbers to give to the group. Have a group text going throughout the duration of the book club. Send reminders each week about meeting times, special prayer requests, etc.
5. Pray before starting each session - Tip - if you also wanted to cover personal prayer requests without it taking too much time, why not let people write them on index cards and swap them with each other?
6. Encourage everyone to participate. This can be challenging as some are more comfortable opening up. Tips - make eye contact with everyone (not just the talkers), don't be afraid of silence (it's often processing time), and ask everyone to share their takeaway at the end.
7. Have your own take-aways from each session to give the group. Be willing to share what God is teaching you and how the Holy Spirit has used the book to encourage or convict you personally. This will encourage others to share.
8. Assign someone in the group to do more biblical research on any unanswered questions and report back at the next meeting.



Discussion Questions

taken from Gospel-Shaped Womanhood

Part 1: Gospel-Shaped identity

Ephesians 1 - 4

Chapter one: The Only Good News

1. What does the word "gospel" literally mean? Explain the difference between news and instruction. How does this help us distinguish the biblical gospel from false gospels?

2. If you were explaining the gospel to the fifteen-year-old sitting in my office, what would you say?

3. Read Ephesians 2:1-3. What's wrong with the statement: "She made a mistake, but that's not really who she is; deep down she has a good heart"?



Discussion Questions

Chapter one: The Only Good News

4. Read Ephesians 2:8–9. Why is the exhortation to “believe in yourself” at odds with the gospel of grace? Why can’t belief in self save us?

5. When it comes to belief in Jesus, what is the difference between intellectual assent and dependent trust? (Hint: Remember the airplane illustration!) Explain why both are important.

6. Read Ephesians 2:4–6, 10. What change in our identity does God’s grace bring? How does this help us be true to Christ rather than self?

7. Have you believed the gospel of grace, repented of your sins, and put your faith in Christ alone for salvation? If not, what’s stopping you from doing so today?

Chapter two: Every Spiritual Blessing

1. What categories do you primarily use to describe yourself and to tell others how you spend your days?

2. Which category are you most tempted to look to as a source of your identity and as a measure of your worth? How have you been let down when you try to do this? Explain.

3. Read Genesis 1:27–28. What does it mean to be made in the image of God and what implications does this have for our identity?

4. How has sin marred the image of God in humanity, leading us all into an identity crisis?

Chapter two: Every Spiritual Blessing

5. What is the difference between possessing worth and being worthy?

6. The gospel is not only good news for our eternal salvation but also for our identity now. Read Ephesians 1:3. What does it mean to be in Christ? What does it mean that Christ is in us?

7. Based on Ephesians 1:3–12, how does being in Christ bring lasting assurance that we are deeply wanted, loved, forgiven, and secure?

8. Are you resting in your identity and worth in Christ day by day? Ask the Lord to help you turn away from seeking to find your primary identity in anything but him.

Chapter three: True Female Empowerment

1. Have you ever felt confused about what actually empowers women? Jot down or discuss some ways the world defines female empowerment yet also sends confusing messages about it.

2. What is the only real basis for women's rights and all human rights?

3. Many Christian women don't know what to think about the feminist movement. It appears to be a mixed bag of good (e.g. gaining women the right to vote) and bad (e.g. rejecting Christian sexual ethics). In what ways has the movement been harmful to women? In what ways has it failed to empower women? (Hint: Remember that power divorced from God is no power at all.)

4. Read John 14:16-17 & Ephesians 1:13-14. How does being sealed by the indwelling Holy Spirit empower us as women?

Chapter three: True Female Empowerment

5. Read Paul's prayer in Ephesians 1:16-19. What is he asking God to do for believers through the Holy Spirit? Explain how, biblically speaking, knowledge is power.

6. Paul prays the Spirit would enlighten believers to truly know the hope, riches, and power that are theirs in Christ. Read Ephesians 1:9-10. How does God's promise to unite all things in Christ bring us hope?

7. A woman who is secure in her identity and inheritance in Christ has great power. What is she free from and what is she free for?

8. Take some time to pray through Ephesians 1:16-19. Ask the Father to enlighten and empower you through his Spirit.

Chapter four: Part of the Family

1. Why do all human beings need and want to belong to a group bigger than themselves? Based on Genesis 2:5-25, explain how the family was a fundamental part of God's plan for human community and relationships at large. What went wrong?

2. How have you seen sin's separating effects in the world? How have you experienced sin's separating effects in your own life?

3. What part was Israel supposed to play in God's plan to restore people back to himself and to each other? How did Israel fail? Why did God's plan succeed despite Israel's failure?

4. What is the mystery Paul seeks to convey in Ephesians 2:11-22? How does the cross-work of Christ eradicate the separation that sin caused between God and mankind? And between people?

Chapter four: Part of the Family

5. If you are in Christ, you belong to God's unbreakable, eternal family. How does this bring you comfort and joy while you are still living in a world full of conflict, separation, and loneliness?

6. Our local churches are not yet perfectly united. Why is this? How does Ephesians 5:27 encourage us about the future?

7. Are you an active, serving member of a local church? What are some practical ways you can seek to be the church to others in your local body, especially to those with whom you may differ or disagree?

Chapter five: **Walking Worthy**

1. If someone asked when you got saved, what would you say? Share your story of salvation past.

2. "The gospel... is not only the way we begin in Christ; it is the way we grow up in Christ" (J.D. Greear). Is this concept new to you? Based on what you've read in this chapter, what does this mean?

3. Read Ephesians 4:1 and describe the shift Paul makes at this point in his letter. Why is "therefore" a crucial word in 4:1?

4. Explain what Paul means when he urges believers to walk worthy of their calling (Eph. 4:1). What wrong ways of thinking and acting are we prone to when we realise this is easier said than done?

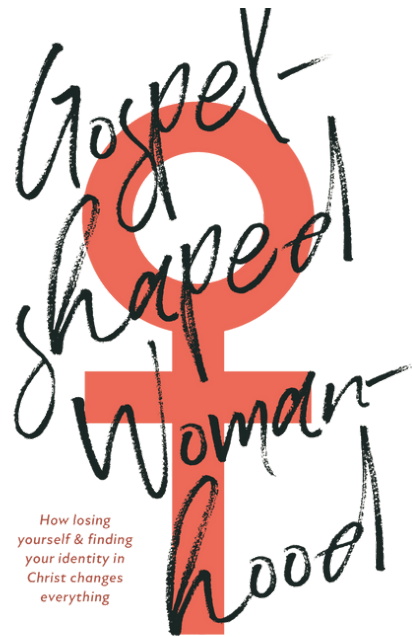
Chapter five: **Walking Worthy**

5. What are the theological words for salvation past, present, and future?

Discuss or jot down some of the distinctions between these three. Describe how they are also an unbreakable unity (see Rom. 8:29–30). As you look at your own life, how do both realities bring you comfort?

6. As Christian women, what part do we play in our own sanctification (Eph. 4:20–24)? How is this different from striving harder to be good in our own strength?

7. "Identity drives activity." Explain what is meant by this statement. What are some practical ways you can seek to become deeply rooted in Christ in order to spur godly living?



Discussion Questions

taken from Gospel-Shaped Womanhood

Part 2: Gospel-Shaped activity

Ephesians 4 - 6



Discussion Questions

Chapter six: Women Who Work

1. When it comes to your work, are you more likely to feel pride or insecurity? Or do you swing between the two?

2. Read Genesis 1:28. What was the intended purpose of human work? How did humanity's relationship with work become distorted?

3. Read Ephesians 2:8–10. How is this passage both a humbling jolt and very good news for those who idolise self and work?

4. In thinking about the work you do (or want to do), how are you prone to draw sacred/secular divisions? How does Ephesians 6:5–9 apply to both Christian employees and employers?



Discussion Questions

Chapter six: Women Who Work

5. Contrast the world's view of women who pour themselves fully into the work of home and family with the Scripture's call for women to be life-givers in the home (see Titus 2:3-5). Have you been shaped more by the world or the Word in this area?

6. Read Ephesians 4:11-16. How are you using your gifts to nurture life in the church? If you're not, how can you begin?

7. Think of one practical way you can encourage another Christian woman whose work is different from yours. Rather than comparing, how can you spur her on to serve others and glorify God through her labors?



Discussion Questions

Chapter seven: **Authentic Friendship**

1. Think back over your friendships throughout the course of life. What have been some of your greatest challenges and greatest joys? What about your friendships currently?

2. Why can friendships be so complex and difficult?

3. Read John 15:13-16 and Ephesians 4:4-6. What does the gospel secure for us in terms of friendship? How does this bring you comfort?

4. If someone were to ask, "Who are your people?" what would you say? Which attitude mentioned in Ephesians 4:1-3 feels most challenging as you cultivate friendships within your church?

Chapter seven: Authentic Friendship

5. Do you tend to sit back and wait for others to pursue you in friendship? When you do pursue others, are you likely to move toward only those who are like you? Think of one way you can reach out to a sister who is different from you (different age, season, etc.) this week.

6. Read Ephesians 4:15 & 25. Do you have sisters in Christ who know you well enough to call out your sin and remind you of the hope of the gospel? Do you have sisters for whom you can do the same? What are some practical ways you can cultivate "friends-like-family" relationships in your local church?

7. To grow in being a Christ-like friend to others, we must develop a deeper friendship with Christ. What are some practical ways to do this?

Chapter eight: **Temples Not Idols**

1. In what ways can women have a love/hate relationship with their bodies? What does this look like in your life?

2. Why do we often fall into the trap of thinking that the body is bad? How does Genesis 1:31 and Psalm 139:14 correct this view?

3. Is your tendency to control your body for your own glory, to be controlled by your bodily appetites for your own pleasure, or both? How does this show itself in your life?

4. Read Ephesians 2:22, 5:2 and 5:8-14. How is Jesus' sacrificial death and resurrection good news for our bodies as well as our souls?

Chapter eight: **Temples Not Idols**

5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:19–20. Do you bristle when you read that your body belongs to God? Why? Explain why this is really a comforting reality.

6. What does it mean to be a living sacrifice? How can we use our bodies for good?

7. How does the call to offer your body as a living sacrifice to God shape your views (and practice) of diet and exercise? Are you in a season when you need to eat and exercise more, less, or differently in order to better glorify God in your body?

Chapter nine: Sexuality and Marriage

1. What are some messages the world sends regarding romance, sexuality, and marriage? How is the teaching "True love waits" on its own not enough to counter the world's message?

2. Read Genesis 1:27–28 and Ephesians 5:31–32. Explain how God's creation of male and female image-bearers is essential to his purposes to fill the world with his glory and redeem it from sin.

3. Describe some of the ways love and sex have "gone off the rails" in our world and in your own life. Why should Christians teach that "God is love" rather than "love is love"?

4. The Bible tells a divine love story which begins and ends with a wedding. How does this help us see God's boundaries for human sexuality as purposeful and good rather than arbitrary and cruel?

Chapter nine: **Sexuality and Marriage**

5. Read Ephesians 5:22–33. Describe how the union of one man and one woman for life is intended to image Christ’s relationship with the church. How does understanding human marriage as a temporary signpost affect our understanding of singleness (see 1 Cor. 7:25–35)?

6. Whether you are single, dating, married, or single again, have you completely submitted your sexuality and relationships to the lordship of your true Bridegroom? Discuss or jot down some practical ways that you can turn to him for help, healing, and growth in your relationships.

7. Both marriage and singleness are gifts from God. Each state comes with its own hardships and advantages. What are some practical ways you can encourage both your married and single sisters in Christ to faithfully steward their sexuality and relationships for the sake of the Kingdom?

Chapter ten: Women of War

1. As you consider your life, how do you want it to count and make a difference in the world? Do you tend to assume world-changing is the work of well-known influencers and "super Christians"?

2. What does it mean that every believer is both a saint and a soldier? When you consider your identity in Christ, do you think of yourself as a saint? A soldier? Why or why not?

3. Read Ephesians 6:10–13. Christians can either be unaware of Satan or become too focused on him. How does this passage help us strike a proper balance in thinking about the supernatural powers? In what ways do you need to wake up to the unseen war?

Chapter ten: Women of War

4. The Bible calls Satan "the Father of lies." Describe how he plays to the sins you're most prone to through specific temptations?

5. Read Ephesians 6:14–17. Choose one of the six pieces of armor Paul lists and describe how it reflects the character of God and the gospel. Which piece of armor brings you the most comfort?

6. Explain how waging war against the enemy is like getting dressed spiritually. Practically speaking, how do we put on the armor and fight? Pick one piece of the armor and describe what it would look like for you to put it on and wage war.

Chapter ten: **Women of War**

7. To be a gospel-shaped woman is to daily renew our minds in our Christian identity and then allow that identity to drive all we do in life. Which chapter from Part 1 of this book was most helpful in giving you a better understanding of who you are in Christ? Discuss or jot down how this understanding is changing the way you live in one area of life, perhaps by picking a topic from Part 2.