

# Grace-Fueled WOMANHOOD

## LEADER GUIDE

SISTER,

First of all, I want to thank you for your willingness to lead a group of women in this study. Christ sees you, and he is greatly honored by your heart to serve him through serving others. In Acts 2:42–47, we see a beautiful picture of what fellowship among believers is to look like. Verse 42 says, “And they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.” Fellowship begins with worship and the Word. I pray that your small group looks like this verse—devoted to Scripture, to serving one another, and to praying in Jesus’ name. I believe God is going to do a mighty work in your group as you meet together weekly to share what you are learning and encourage one another in the Lord.

Second, it is my goal through this leader guide to help equip you to lead your group. Coordinating a small group can be intimidating. For some of you, this is the first group you’ve led, and you are nervous just thinking about it! Others may be seasoned Bible study leaders and feel comfortable in this setting. Either way, I pray we would all come to the Lord with open hands and humble hearts as we seek to pour into the women around us. Recognizing how small we are and how great God is is the best place to start.

On the following pages, you will find some practical encouragement for leading your small group and questions to help spark conversation during your meetings. You know your group, and I trust that you will prayerfully lead each week by being led by the Holy Spirit. This study is about knowing Christ more through Scripture, and the Word should be the main focus of your sessions. I pray this time would be protected and blessed in the Lord.

Before we begin, I want to pray for you:

Father, you are high and holy, yet you are also near us and always with us. The treasures you have stored up within your Word are innumerable. We want to spend our days digging for treasure and dining at your table. Thank you for the women who are going to be reading this study. Thank you for their hearts to serve you and to teach others the truth of the gospel. I pray you would first change their own hearts as they study, and in turn, that you would give them the strength to teach and lead those around them. Open their eyes to behold wondrous things from your law (Ps. 119:18). I pray Christ would be glorified in this study and in our lives. In Jesus’ mighty name. Amen.

IN CHRIST, GRETCHEN

# Preparing to Lead A SMALL GROUP

- Create a space that is inviting and welcoming. If you are meeting in your home, don't feel that everything has to look perfect each week. God might use the mess to bring freedom to another woman! The way you show hospitality and welcome them in will show them the unfailing love of Christ. If you are meeting in a church or another local area, try to find a spot without distractions that will be a safe place for women to talk and participate in the group.
- You set the level of vulnerability for your group. What I mean is that as you share from your own heart and personal experiences, other women will open up to share. Along with this, make sure that your group is not a place to gossip. Set the standard from the start that group meetings will be confidential and that any conversation that is steering in the wrong direction will be redirected.
- Pray before and after the study. It is easy to rush through group meetings without first quieting our hearts to pray, but this is vital. Lead the group in prayer and ask other women to pray as well.
- Protect the time you meet together. It is good to have some structure and a set time limit for your meetings. That way, each group member knows the allotted time and will feel comfortable leaving once the meeting time is over, even if some women decide to stay and fellowship.

# Introductory Session

1. Share the dates and times that you will be meeting so the women know ahead of time and can commit to being there. Hand them their study books if they don't already have them and instruct them to complete the first week's homework before the next meeting. There are five days of study each week and one recap day.
2. Begin by sharing the guidelines of the group. Guidelines could include:
  - This group is a confidential, safe place, unless there is any indication of harm or danger.
  - This group is a commitment.
  - This group is a place to ask questions, encourage one another, and seek Christ together. It is a place where we will speak life, hope, and freedom into others, not a place to gossip.
3. Consider an icebreaker game or question to introduce the women to one another! You could ask fun get-to-know-you questions such as: If you were stranded on a desert island and could only have three items with you, what would they be and why? Or, if you could travel anywhere in the world, where would you go and why? Questions like these are designed to get women comfortable with each other.
4. Next, share your story. As the leader, sharing your testimony will help the women to know you and trust you. Tell them how you came to know Jesus and why you are leading the group. Remember, women will follow your lead about how to share in this group. There will be plenty of opportunities to share more of your story throughout the following 6 weeks, so you can keep this just a brief introduction.
5. If you have time, go around the group and have the women share their own stories within the time frame of 3–5 minutes each.
6. Close the group by sharing contact info and praying for one another.

# Week One

## SETTING THE STAGE

**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions as well. Ask a specific woman to read the Scripture passage (when applicable) rather than posing it as a question to the whole group. Try to ask a different woman each time to get all women involved in the discussion.

### **DAY ONE:** *Behind the Chapter*

Who wrote the book of Proverbs?

Who is speaking in these specific verses?

Who is the audience?

What initially comes to mind when you think about the Proverbs 31 woman?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY TWO:** *Behind the Chapter, Part II*

What is the purpose of the book of Proverbs?

What is the genre of the book of Proverbs?

When was the book originally written?

What did you learn about what it means to “fear the Lord?”

Is there anything else from today’s study that stood out to you?

### **DAY THREE:** *The Wisdom of Fear*

What warnings and instructions are given in this passage?

What is the definition of wisdom?

How are wisdom and the fear of the Lord intertwined?

Why is it important to treasure wisdom?

Is there anything else from today’s study that stood out to you?

### **DAY FOUR:** *Studying Proverbs 31 with Gospel Glasses*

What is the gospel?

How do you see the gospel in Proverbs 21?

What comes to mind when you hear the term “woman of valor?”

How does knowing that all Scripture is about Christ change how you read the Bible?

Is there anything else from today’s study that stood out to you?

**DAY FIVE:** *Lady Wisdom, Lady Folly, & the Valiant Woman*

How is Lady Wisdom described?

How is Lady Folly described?

How is Lady Wisdom personified in the Valiant Woman?

What area of your life lacks wisdom?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

**WEEKLY APPLICATION:** Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

**CLOSE IN PRAYER.**

# Week Two

## *SHE IS FAR MORE PRECIOUS THAN JEWELS*

**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions as well. Ask a specific woman to read the Scripture passage rather than posing it as a question to the whole group. Try to ask a different woman each time to get all women involved in the discussion.

### **DAY ONE:** *The Chase*

Read Proverbs 31:10.

What is the difference between excellence and perfection?

How does a life of excellence differ from a life that strives after perfection?

What does sanctification look like in the life of a believer?

How is God chiseling at your heart in your current circumstances?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY TWO:** *Abundant Fruit of Grace*

Read Proverbs 31:11.

What do you look for in the character of people you put your trust in?

According to Proverbs 31:8, what's the result of trusting in God's wisdom?

What makes a grace-fueled woman trustworthy?

What aspects of God's character show that he is trustworthy?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY THREE:** *Doing Good in Every Season*

Read Proverbs 31:12.

What part of this verse stands out to you the most?

Is it harder or easier to honor the people you walk in a close relationship with? Why or why not?

Why is it significant that it happens "all the days of her life?"

What circumstances in your current season require you to be valiant? What characteristic of God empowers you to face those challenges with confidence?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY FOUR:** *Drudgery to Glory*

Read Proverbs 31:13.

What kinds of hands does the Proverbs 31 woman work with?

What are several antonyms for willing?



Do you think you are more like the ant or sluggard in Proverbs 6?

What mundane task provokes a spirit of grumbling instead of diligence?

What practical steps can you take today to honor God with the use of your time?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY FIVE:** *When I Rise, Give Me Jesus*

Read Proverbs 31:14-15.

According to Proverbs 31, what kind of provision is necessary in the morning?

In Mark 1:35, when does Jesus rise and where does he go?

How can you take the concept of rising early and apply it well to your life circumstances?

What is your biggest distraction when you meet with God?

How can you create space for hearing from God through studying his Word?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

**WEEKLY APPLICATION:** Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

**CLOSE IN PRAYER.**

# Week Three

## *SHE DRESSES HERSELF WITH STRENGTH*

**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions as well. Ask a specific woman to read the Scripture passage rather than posing it as a question to the whole group. Try to ask a different woman each time to get all women involved in the discussion.

### **DAY ONE:** *Decision Maker*

Read Proverbs 31:16.

Who is making the decision about the field and taking action on it?

What keeps you from making a final decision?

How does making wise decisions equip you to do the work God has called you to with purpose?

How can you base your decisions off of Scripture instead of the demands of this world?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY TWO:** *Clothed in Dignity*

Read Proverbs 31:17.

How does the Proverbs 31 woman dress herself?

What is the Hebrew word for strong and what does it mean?

Where do you find your strength?

What insufficient “fig leaf” coverings do you try to wear?

Is there anything else from today’s study that stood out to you?

### **DAY THREE:** *Prepared for Jesus*

Read Proverbs 31:18.

Based on Proverbs 31:18, is it wrong for a woman to recognize the value of her work?

What do you think the second sentence of verse 18 means?

Is your lamp burning continually like the Proverbs 31 woman whose hope is in the Lord?

How are you implementing rest into your daily life?

Is there anything else from today’s study that stood out to you?

### **DAY FOUR:** *The Art of Creativity*

Read Proverbs 31:19.

What skill does the Proverbs 31 woman have?

Describe how we see God as the creator in Genesis 1.

How can you use your creativity for God’s glory?

What practical step can you take to incorporate rest into your daily life this week?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

**DAY FIVE:** *Give Your Nothing*

Read Proverbs 31:20.

How would you characterize the generosity of the Proverbs 31 woman?

In Luke 21:1-4, how did the widow offer a sacrifice that God delighted in?

What are your hands currently clinging to?

How can you sow generously and give with an open hand this week?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

**WEEKLY APPLICATION:** Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

**CLOSE IN PRAYER.**

# Week Four

## *SHE LAUGHS AT THE TIME TO COME*

**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions as well. Ask a specific woman to read the Scripture passage rather than posing it as a question to the whole group. Try to ask a different woman each time to get all women involved in the discussion.

### **DAY ONE:** *Undaunted*

Read Proverbs 31:21.

Why might a woman in the original audience fear snow?

Why doesn't the Proverbs 31 woman fear snow?

Do you struggle with fearing potential failures?

How can you preach the truth of God's Word over your fear?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY TWO:** *Holy Adornment*

Read Proverbs 31:22.

How is her clothing described?

Based on the entire description of the Proverbs 31 woman, why do you think she dresses with care and beauty?

How does the Proverbs 31 woman clothe herself according to verse 25?

In what ways might you be tempted to put too much emphasis on your external beauty?

How can you exchange some of that time or attention for growing in internal beauty?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY THREE: *Righteously Redeemed***

Read Proverbs 31:23.

The leading men of the city gathered at the gates to conduct business and make decisions for the city. How does the good reputation of the husband speak to the diligence of the wife?

How can proverbs 31:23 still relate to women who are single, divorced, or widowed as well as married women?

How did Queen Esther exemplify the Proverbs 31 woman?

When have you let the fear of man determine your course of action?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY FOUR: *Selling Sashes***

Read Proverbs 31:24.

Consider the godly women in your life. What makes their work valuable?

How is Lydia described in Acts 16:14?

How is Lydia similar to the Proverbs 31 woman as she's described in verse 24?

How could God use your talents and skills to benefit the body of believers?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY FIVE:** *Smiling at the Future*

Read Proverbs 23:25.

What does it look like for a woman to be clothed in strength and dignity?

What should believers put off or put to death as God's chosen ones?

What should believers put on?

Why does recognizing that you are chosen by God, holy and beloved, change your actions?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

**WEEKLY APPLICATION:** Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

**CLOSE IN PRAYER.**

# Week Five

## A WOMAN WHO FEARS THE LORD IS TO BE PRAISED

**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions as well. Ask a specific woman to read the Scripture passage rather than posing it as a question to the whole group. Try to ask a different woman each time to get all women involved in the discussion.

### DAY ONE: *Grace Speaker*

Read Proverbs 31:26.

What part of the Proverbs 31 woman's life is discussed in verse 26?

Consider Luke 6:45. Where do our words originate?

How does Deborah (from Judges 4) exemplify the Proverbs 31 woman?

How can you use your words to be a grace-speaker?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### DAY TWO: *Wordless Worship*

Read Proverbs 31:27.

Household duties are easy to overlook. What are the first verb and adverb in this verse?



What are things that have eternal value according to Scripture?

What things in your life have you been neglecting because they feel mundane? What would it look like to do these things unto the Lord?

What are some temporary things that distract you from the eternal?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY THREE:** *A Legacy Worth Leaving*

Read Proverbs 31:28.

What do the responses of her immediate family tell you about the home life of the Proverbs 31 woman?

Why is the Proverbs 31 woman a blessing to others?

In Titus 2:3-5, what are older women called to teach other women and why?

Do you see God using you as a blessing in the life of the people nearest you? Why or why not? How could you grow in that area?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY FOUR:** *Surpassing Excellence*

Read Proverbs 31:29-31.

Who is speaking these words in verse 29?

Do you think these verses are saying that the goal of our diligence is the praise of others? Why or why not?

What will people do when they see your good works according to Matthew 5:16?

What are some ways you lay down your life to serve others?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

## **DAY FIVE: *Beautiful Fear***

Read Proverbs 31:30-31.

What do you see about perishable beauty in these verses?

What are some characteristics of a woman who fears the Lord?

Why is Sarah, Abraham's wife, considered an example of a woman who fears the Lord?

How can you cultivate a heart that fears the Lord?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

**WEEKLY APPLICATION:** Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

**CLOSE IN PRAYER.**

# Week Six

## LIVING DAILY IN FEAR OF THE LORD

**OPEN IN PRAYER:** Ask God to open the eyes of your hearts as you study.

**DISCUSSION:** Walk through the following questions from each day with your group. Remember that answering the simple questions can help women feel prepared to answer the more difficult questions as well. Ask a specific woman to read the Scripture passage rather than posing it as a question to the whole group. Try to ask a different woman each time to get all women involved in the discussion.

### DAY ONE: *Living Wisdom*

Read James 1.

What do you learn about God from this chapter?

What does this chapter tell us we will face in our lives?

How does James encourage us to respond in these situations?

How is the process laid out in James 1 evident in the story of Jesus and the woman at the well?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### DAY TWO: *Ask for Wisdom*

Read James 1:5-8.

What should you do if you lack wisdom?

How does God give wisdom?

Which of God's attributes does Hannah highlight in her prayer?

Where or who do you usually turn to first when you need wisdom? Does this source point you to the wisdom of God or this world?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY THREE:** *Hear the Word*

Read James 1:19.

What three responses should every person have to God's Word?

Why might hearing God's Word sometimes lead to anger in our hearts? Why would this kind of anger not produce righteousness?

Do you believe Jesus can heal the broken places of your soul?

How can you create daily opportunities in your life to hear from God's Word?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

### **DAY FOUR:** *Receive the Word*

Read James 1:21.

What should you put away?

What should you receive?

What does it look like to not just hear but also receive God's Word?

How can you incorporate prayer into your time in the Word to water the soil of your heart, softening it to the conviction and sanctification that result from receiving God's Word?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

## **DAY FIVE:** *Do the Word*

Read James 1:25.

What is the difference between a hearer and a doer?

Who are you deceiving if you hear the Word and don't do it?

How often do you read God's Word but fail to do it?

Which woman of the Bible that you studied over the past six weeks stands out to you?

What have you learned from the way she fears the Lord?

Is there anything else from today's study that stood out to you?

**WEEKLY APPLICATION:** Before you wrap up, share something new you learned about God or the gospel in your study this week. Then share how you can apply that truth to your daily life.

**CLOSE IN PRAYER.**