

Hey Ladies! I am so proud of you for sticking with this study. At this point in a typical year (I know this year is not typical) ladies tend to loose motivation, and can get complacent about their bible study. If you get the sense that ladies are not completing their homework, remember that you can always do part of the homework lesson together as a group. Just read the passage together out loud, answer the questions that Erica poses, and then discuss the content as a group. God sees all of the effort you are putting forth to prepare to lead your group. And it is never a waste of time to read Scripture out loud together- if nothing else. Keep it up and thank you for serving our ladies! XOXO Alisa

Week 6 Unexplainable Jesus

Day 1

This may be another familiar story to the ladies in your group. I thought Erica brought up some good points that I had never considered before. It made me wonder- Why did only leper come back? What were the other 9 lepers thinking? Were they worried that they wouldn't make it to the priest to be declared clean? Did they run to go see their families? Was it too much trouble to walk all the way back to wherever Jesus was to say thank you? Had they so quickly lost sight of what God had done for them, and had already moved on to their daily life- queuing up the next request for God? The leper that came back was a Samaritan- he was even more of an outcast than the other lepers.

It makes me wonder how I would have reacted if Jesus had healed ME of leprosy. I would like to think that I would have been the one leper, but would I? It also makes me think about what Jesus HAS healed me/rescued me from, and if I have given Him appropriate thanks.

Jesus goes on to talk about the time when He would return (when the kingdom of God would come) in Luke 17:20-37. I think this information ties into the story of the lepers. All 10 lepers had the chance to recognize Jesus for what He did for them, but only one was tuned in enough to do it. So it will be when Jesus returns for His church. Are you in tune with what God is doing on an eternal perspective, or are you so caught up in the world that you might miss it? Erica makes a good point on the top of page 167. This is a warning from God.

Erica poses some great questions at the end of Day 1 that you can pitch out to your group after reading the Scripture for this day.

Day 2

Jesus tells two more parables in Luke 18:1-14 (after reading so many, I have come to believe that parables are not as easy to understand as we would sometimes think!). I think it is common to think that we need to hound GOD with our prayers- that He does not hear us the first time, but as with other parables- I think the focus is more on the nature of God. If a human judge who neither feared God or respected man would grant this widow her request, HOW MUCH MORE will God be there for us? Perhaps this parable is more about the character of God. The next set of Scriptures about the Pharisee and the tax collector in the temple is very revealing- both about our hearts and the heart of God. Which

person do the ladies in your group relate to? The Pharisee or the tax collector? What does it say about the heart of GOD that Jesus shares this parable?

I love the explanation and warning that Erica issues at the bottom to page 171. And, again, great discussion questions at the bottom of page 172 to pitch out to the ladies in your group.

Day 3

The story of the rich ruler is a reminder of where we need to place our security. As Erica states: Is God worthy of all you have? Luke 18:29-30 is a great encouragement to anyone who has sacrificed the comforts of this temporal life for kingdom work- I think of missionaries, church planters, and those who have left well-paying careers to go into full time ministry. I appreciate Erica pointing out the cultural context of Jesus' statement- in the days of Jesus it was believed that wealth was a sign of God's favor.

Do we love the promises in Scripture that bring great comfort, but like to gloss over the difficult demands by Jesus that we hand everything over to Him?

As Erica puts it- if God pries open our hands and takes what we think we need, will we walk sadly away or will we follow Him, knowing that He has plans to place in our palms something that will give us more joy than the world could ever offer?

Day 4

Zacchaeus was another rich man- but perhaps unlike the one in the story in Day 3, Zacchaeus was a rich man that was hated by the Jews, as tax collectors were known to be dishonest. Jesus saw past all of that into the heart of Zacchaeus who was ready and willing to submit his life to Him.

This day centers around worldly wealth, and how we are to handle the resources we have been given. Erica sums up the teaching well on page 183 of the study. There is no one size fits all rule for wealth- however Jesus gives us warnings and admonishments about our attitude toward our wealth.

I once had wealth explained to me this way: there are unrighteous rich (those who gain wealth in unrighteous ways and use it to promote themselves in a worldly manner) and unrighteous poor (those who are lazy/slothful and therefore do not have resources, or spend their resources unwisely/unrighteously and therefore are poor), and there are also righteous rich (those who are rich and use their wealth toward kingdom purposes) and righteous poor (those who are poor and use what little they have toward kingdom purposes). It is not as much about how much you have or don't have, but how you view your wealth and what you use it to advance.

Day 5

Last week in our group, one of our ladies shared that she has been reading through the Old Testament this year and how the Old Testament gives so much more meaning to the New Testament. In this day, we see how many Old Testament prophecies are fulfilled in the triumphal entry. It can be hard to flip back and forth in your bible, but it is a good exercise to see how the Old Testament fit together.

Remember the Bible was not written by one person at one time- over 40 authors contributed to it over the course of 1,500 years. And despite this, the themes through it are consistent. This day was hard- but well worth the effort!