

"Together in the Word" Bible studies offer women of all ages helpful tools for becoming spiritually sound and able to spread God's truth everywhere. Each study is divided into sections that can be completed daily, weekly or monthly. Every section contains personal application questions designed to help you apply biblical truths to daily life.

#### HOW DO I USE THIS STUDY FOR A WAC MEETING OR WOMEN'S GROUP?

Because every group is unique, we offer multiple ways to use "Together in the Word" studies within your women's group meetings. First, evaluate your group. What works best for your women? Here are some suggestions.

##### IF WOMEN LIKE VARIETY AND CREATIVE PRESENTATIONS

Use the WNAC Program and Plan Book as a presentation guide.

##### IF WOMEN ENJOY DISCUSSION AND INTERACTION

Utilize the free downloadable facilitator's guide at [www.wnac.org](http://www.wnac.org). Discuss the weekly questions along with the designated life application questions.

##### IF WOMEN PREFER TO JUST READ ALOUD

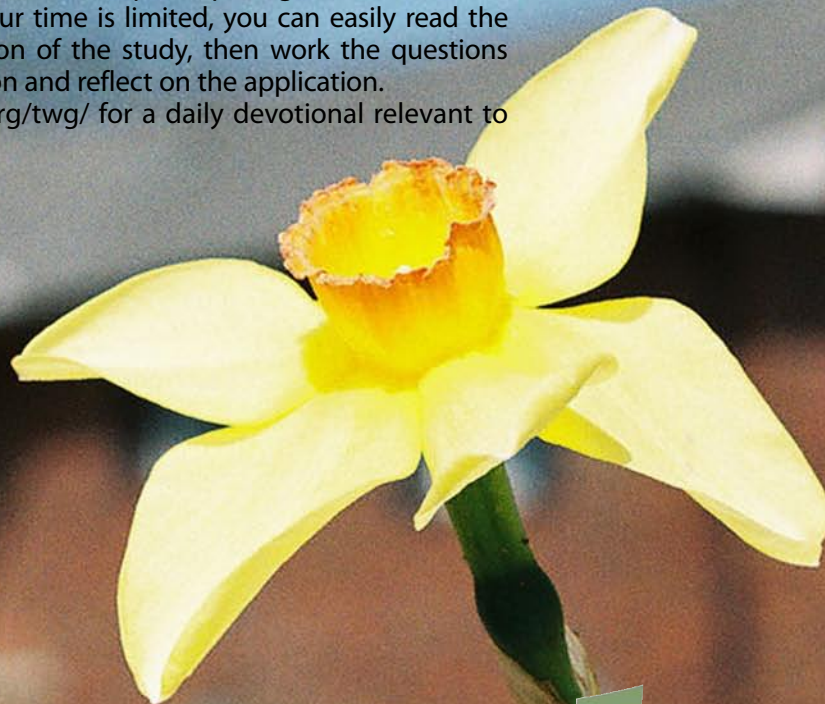
Allow ladies opportunity to present the material one section at a time. Use the life application questions, but omit the fill in the blank sections if women are uncomfortable with this.

#### HOW DO I USE THIS STUDY FOR MY PERSONAL DEVOTION TIME?

Each section includes a Scripture passage and interactive questions. Even if your time is limited, you can easily read the passage and a portion of the study, then work the questions relating to that section and reflect on the application.

Visit [www.wnac.org/twg/](http://www.wnac.org/twg/) for a daily devotional relevant to the current study.

# KNOW HIS CALLING



IN THE WORD  
together  
BIBLE STUDIES



# IN THE HOME

**GOAL:** To know the hope of God's calling for us as women in our homes.

**GUIDANCE:** 1 Samuel 3; Proverbs 31:10-31; Luke 10:38-42; Ephesians 5.

**GEM:** "Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands" (PROVERBS 14:1).

## THE CALL

Someone is always calling. The telemarketers, your mom, the American Heart Association, your neighbor and your girlfriends keep the telephone ringing. If you're a young mother, your children call for you constantly. (If your children are grown, they probably don't call you enough.) If you are married, your husband calls you—he needs your help to find something. Your boss, your co-workers, your customers call. Telephones and cell phones and e-mail and intercoms and sirens summon us all day everyday. You answer the call of others constantly.

So have you given any thought to the Lord's calling for your life?

What does He have to say about the way you live your life? How can you acknowledge His Lordship of your life in the choices you make, in the lifestyle you choose, in the daily activities that involve you?

The first challenge is to answer His call. Yes, you have accepted Him as your Savior, but the story cannot stop there. If you are bought with a price (and you have been), then you are no longer your own (1 Corinthians 6:19-20); you are not the one who gets to choose. What does your Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, have to say about your life at home, at work, in the community, in the world?

When He says, "Follow Me," you must make a choice. Your life will be different from the lives of non-believers if you follow Him. Your home will be different, too. Commit now to hearing and obeying His call for you; embrace the difference this will make in your life. You see, this difference is the attractive salt and light our world needs to bring them to Christ.

The second challenge, though, is to find hope and joy in the call He has for you. Even if He gives you hard things—circumstances you would never have chosen for yourself—you must find your delight in Him. You must trust His direction for you and find joy in the journey He has planned. You will find that God gives good things to His children (Matthew 7:11; Luke 11:13), and His commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:3).



### TALK ABOUT IT

*DOES GOD SEEM to ask too much of you sometimes?*

*Does His plan for you always seem good?*

*How can you be faithful even when you don't understand His working in your life?*

### EXPLORE THE WORD (Week One: 1 Samuel 3)

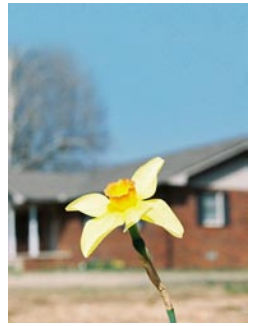
*Pray, asking God to speak to you daily through His Word.*

1. Review the story of Samuel's calling in 1 Samuel 3. According to verse 1, what was Samuel's job? \_\_\_\_\_ What characterized the church and the land of Israel at that time? \_\_\_\_\_

How is that similar to our experience today? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Where was Samuel sleeping, according to verse 3? \_\_\_\_\_

How many times did the young man hear his name called? Note that God knew his name. He knows yours too. See John 10:3; Isaiah 45:1-5 and Isaiah 49:16. Reflect on the significance of that truth. \_\_\_\_\_



CAN YOU POINT TO A MENTOR OR MENTORS WHO HAVE HELPED YOU HEAR AND ANSWER GOD'S CALLING? WHERE ARE YOU IN THE MENTOR/PROTÉGÉE PROCESS? ARE YOU ASSUMING ROLES BOTH AS A LEARNER AND A TEACHER AS YOU WORK WITH OTHER BELIEVERS? WHAT STEPS CAN YOU TAKE TOWARD FINDING A "PAUL," A "TIMOTHY," AND A "BARNABAS" TO HELP YOU GROW?

3. What is Samuel's response when he thinks that Eli is the one calling him? (See verses 4, 6, and 8.) \_\_\_\_\_

His mentor and instructor, Eli, instructs Samuel on the proper response for answering God's call. What was he to say? \_\_\_\_\_

Examine the passage in Titus 2:3-5 and reflect on the role of mentors in your Christian life (See sidebar at right.) \_\_\_\_\_

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4. When God's calling came to Samuel, it was not an easy message. He had hard things to say to Eli. According to verses 17-18, what was Samuel's response to Eli's questions the next day? What should this teach you about your relationship with other believers? \_\_\_\_\_

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5. What were the results of Samuel's faithful obedience to God's calling on his life (v. 19)? \_\_\_\_\_ Even when the world does not understand your call from God, what can you expect in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

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## THE FOUNDATION

God established the home. It was His design from Creation. The foundation of the home as the basis for our society preceded even the establishment of the church or government. God structured and planned homes for the nurture and instruction of children, for the strength and provision for family members and for the joy and support of individuals. Your home is God's idea.

Certainly, it is a good idea. Sociologists and psychologists understand the value of a strong home base; psychiatrists ask questions about it if someone goes off the deep end. But—just a guess—June Cleaver doesn't live at your address. You probably haven't been cooking dinner all day in your high heels and pearls when your loving family gathers at your candlelit table tonight. How do we work out our calling in the home when the family is changing so drastically in today's world?

We struggle today with broken homes. Like it or not, divorce is a reality in the world—even in the church. Are singles or single parents still able to answer God's calling for them? What plan does God have for the *exceptions* to His design? And what about widows or those who have never married? Do they still have a calling from God concerning their homes?

The answers are difficult. But the principles remain solid. God knows we need families, and He put you in one—imperfect though it may be. Can you thank Him for providing for you? For seeing you through good and bad times in that family? For the lessons you learned from your family? For giving you a place in the family of God?

Take a minute to evaluate your current family. Everyone has one. Single women build a family around themselves. This could include family of origin, friends or an *adopted* family. Widows may live with heartache, but God still provides people to connect and care for them as family. Married, single, widowed or divorced, (or any combination of the four) your home is still significant to God, and He wants it to be a testimony of His control and Lordship in your life.

You are a unique woman, uniquely gifted in your home. Your family life is what it is, at least in part, because of you. God planned your personality and your abilities and your gifts to contribute to your family. Make the best of who you are and what He has given you. He's the expert at family planning. Take stock of your role in your home, the way you impact those in



your immediate family and your extended family. Ask God to make that impact count for Him and honor Him.

Too often women get caught up in what their home is not. They wish for a husband, wish for a *different* husband, wish for children, wish for *more* children, wish their children were grown, wish for grandchildren and on and on. They would like to change addresses or furniture or mates. They would swap out and rearrange and do over and undo if they could. But instead, God wants us to learn contentment (Philippians 4:11).

Contentment is not a lack of ambition and a resignation to the status quo. It doesn't mean you never get new furniture. But contentment begins with acceptance. First you accept yourself as God made you; then you accept the circumstances He gives you. With peaceful gratitude, you trust Him steadfastly without comparing yourself to others, without envy and jealousy of what others appear to have. If you practice that kind of contentment, God will bless you and your home.

Another principle that reflects God's plan for your home is redemption. Even if your home is less than perfect (and it is), God wants to reveal Himself through this. He wants to use your home situation for His glory. Maybe your dreams haven't come true for your home. Maybe age or trouble or illness or disappointment has touched your situation. Will you allow God to redeem even those difficulties and heartaches?



### TALK ABOUT IT

*NAME SOME CHANGES that alter family structure?*

*What different configurations of family do you see in your women's group?*

*Is your church ministering to all these types of families? How? In what ways could your ministry to families improve?*

*If your church doesn't include some less-than-perfect family types, should you take inventory of your ministry in the community?*

### EXPLORE THE WORD (Week Two: Proverbs 31)

*Pray, asking God to open your eyes and enlighten your mind to His truths through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

1. Read Proverbs 31:10-31. List what "Ruby" does for the following people:

Her husband (vv. 11-12). \_\_\_\_\_

Her household (vv. 15, 21, 27). \_\_\_\_\_

Her servants (v. 15). \_\_\_\_\_

Herself (v. 17). \_\_\_\_\_

The poor and needy (v. 20). \_\_\_\_\_

What do her husband and children do for her (v. 28)? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Make a list of Ruby's activities described in the verses above, but update them to match the activities of women today. (*Example: v. 13—crafts; v. 14—shopping*) \_\_\_\_\_

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What would your own list include? \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Does the list change with the stages of life? How? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Reread this Scripture passage once more and think of adjectives that would describe Ruby. What qualities are true of her as a person? (*Your list might include precious (v. 10), trustworthy (v. 11), willing worker (v. 13), etc.*) Do you see those same characteristics in your own life? Which ones? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

TOO OFTEN WE ARE CAUGHT UP WITH THE "TO DO" LIST INSTEAD OF THE "TO BE" LIST.

WHEN WE START WITH CHARACTER—WITH BECOMING A WOMAN WHO FEARS GOD—ALL THE ACTIVITIES WILL FALL INTO PLACE.

4. "A woman who fears the Lord is to be praised," verse 30 tells us. What three sources of praise does Ruby have, according to verses 28 and 31? \_\_\_\_\_

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## THE FOCUS

When you read *Better Homes and Gardens* or *Good Housekeeping*, you won't find a word about spiritual development. You'll find recipes for better meals and decorating tips for lovelier rooms, but there won't be any articles about sacrificing for your family or teaching them about Jesus. There will be beautiful furnishings and art and manicured lawns, but there won't be a word about Sunday school or family devotions. There may be tips on parties and entertaining, but the focus will be on what you have and how it looks; nothing will be said about true Christian hospitality and how it can be a testimony of God's grace to others.

The world just doesn't focus on what God counts as important. Your home should be a testimony of God at work. You see, there's absolutely nothing wrong with good recipes and tastefully decorated rooms and gorgeous flower gardens. The problem develops when those things are the only focus of our homes.

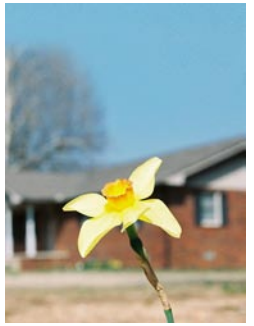
Your home, in fact, becomes a test tube to demonstrate to others that the principles of the gospel—lived in close proximity to others—really do work. Your family proves that love and forgiveness and patience and diligence actually make a difference even when there are dirty socks and dirty diapers thrown into the mix with the pretty words. You prove that Jesus, the unseen Guest, changes the way we treat each other and the way we spend our money and the way we use our time.

People take off their masks when they put on their house slippers. They lose their pretense and their artificiality. Your family knows better than anyone else if your relationship with Jesus Christ is real. And your home will reflect that.

So what do your children know that the ladies in your WAC group don't know? What does your husband see that is hidden from the person down the pew from you? What stories can your sisters and brothers tell that would shock your preacher?

Sunday morning is not the test of authentic Christianity. Maybe the test is Monday morning when the alarm clock goes off very early. Maybe the test comes in the middle of the night when the child is sick. And when the keys are lost and the toast is burned and the taxes are due and the floor needs mopping and the remote control is missing and the grass needs cutting—the tests go on and on. Authentic Christianity goes the extra mile and turns the other cheek and gives without expectation of repayment—even to those who live under your roof.

Unbelievers will take notice when you pass the test. Your guests and your neighbors will be able to see the difference if your motives honor Christ. If you love your neighbors as yourself, they will understand a lot more about what it means to love the Lord with all your heart. In a world very hungry for the *real thing*, your calling to honor God in your home is a persuasive testimony.



NO MATTER  
WHAT VARIETY  
OF HOME YOU  
HAVE, YOUR  
GODLINESS WILL  
BE REWARDED.



### TALK ABOUT IT

*WHAT DISTINGUISHES your home as a Christian home?*

*What do neighbors see if they peek through your windows or hear when you're out in the yard that makes your home different from their home?*

### EXPLORE THE WORD (Week Three: Luke 10:38-42)

*Pray, asking God to speak to you through His Word.*

1. In Luke 10:38-42, who is the homeowner? \_\_\_\_\_ Reflecting on ancient Jewish customs, where it was very unusual for women to be property owners, how do you think this happened? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



**WHAT MAKES A FAMILY?**

WHILE WE STRONGLY REJECT THE HOMOSEXUAL AGENDA THAT PROMOTES SAME-SEX MARRIAGE, WE DON'T WANT TO FORGET THAT FAMILIES COME IN ALL SHAPES AND SIZES.

REMEMBER THAT PEOPLE ARE ALWAYS MORE IMPORTANT THAN STUFF.

2. Who lived with Martha? (*John 11 may also give insight, though it is possible that Lazarus has another house nearby.*) \_\_\_\_\_

Who lives in your house? \_\_\_\_\_

Take a moment to consider single or widowed people in your church. Write down names or visualize some faces. \_\_\_\_\_

Are these individuals included in a family? \_\_\_\_\_ If not, could you include them in yours?

How? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Describe the focus of Mary during Jesus' visit. \_\_\_\_\_

Describe the focus of Martha during His visit. \_\_\_\_\_

So who is the better housekeeper—Mary or Martha? \_\_\_\_\_

Who is the better homemaker? Explain your answer. \_\_\_\_\_

4. How does Jesus evaluate the two sisters? \_\_\_\_\_

What would Jesus say to Martha Stewart? \_\_\_\_\_

5. With whom do you identify—Mary or Martha? \_\_\_\_\_

**IF YOU ARE A "MARY,"**

Remember, God's Word instructs us to be "keepers at home" (Titus 2:5) and work to find that balance.

**IF YOU ARE A "MARTHA,"**

Remember, Jesus didn't tell Martha to quit serving, but instead to focus on priorities and motives for her service.

What do you need to do in your life and in your home to please God? \_\_\_\_\_

## THE INFLUENCE

Face it. In the 21st century if you bring up God's commandment to submit to your husband, you'll be laughed at. Such an *old-fashioned* idea will make you subject to ridicule. Surely, such an idea went out with bloomers.

No. It's there. It's plain. It doesn't change in the new translations. "Wives, submit to your own husbands" (Ephesians 5:22). "Children, obey your parents" (Ephesians 6:1).

The home is a foundational place to learn and to demonstrate respect. This is a God-ordained principle, and it is there for our protection. It's not about who is smarter or who is stronger; it's about order and responsibility in the home. God's pattern is for the husband to be the leader; his wife submits to him as he accepts accountability for their union. The children submit to the parents who are responsible for them. When we approach this heavenly plan with resentment and animosity, we undermine what God has intended for our good. We destroy the harmony He has designed in our homes.

Think about a beautiful symphony orchestra playing your favorite song. The scores are prepared, the instruments are tuned, the director is in place. Suddenly the second violins go on strike. "Why can't we play first violin?" they ask. The tuba player insists that he must play the kettle drum. The oboe player argues with the conductor that he should direct the woodwinds; he understands them better. The trumpets section starts a fight because they can't agree on who has the solo line. The cellist prefers the piccolo's part and refuses to play his own.

That's your family when the Biblical instructions about submission are ignored. No harmonious and inspiring music swells from an orchestra that doesn't stick to the score. A Spirit-filled home, modeled after Christ's relationship to the Church and committed to the teaching of Scripture, is a work of beauty.

A Spirit-filled home is also a refuge for those who live there. You are called to make your home a place of peace and encouragement for your family.

Our homes should provide that protection from the world, giving every family member a place where he or she is accepted and loved and safe. This is no small task. It will demand skill and commitment to offer such a haven. You will have to guard against attacks by the media, by overfull schedules, by well-intentioned friends, by your own selfish desires, and by the Devil himself! But intentionally protect those who share a home with you from the destructive and damaging chaos of this world system. Prepare them for another world by loving them as precious gifts from God, teaching them the enduring Word of God, and prayerfully modeling for them the likeness of the Son of God.



### TALK ABOUT IT

*IN WHAT WAYS* have you seen Satan attack your family or another Christian family? What proactive measures can you recommend to others to protect our families from these attacks?

### EXPLORE THE WORD *(Week Four: Ephesians 5)*

*Pray, asking God to reveal Himself to you through His Word.*

1. Read Ephesians 5. So often when we study this chapter, we focus only on Christ's instructions to husbands and wives. But take a minute to review the set-up. Who does verse 1 tell us to imitate? \_\_\_\_\_ Who is the model for our love, according to verse 2? \_\_\_\_\_
2. From verses 3-14, make two lists: Things that Belong to Darkness and Things that Belong to the Light. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What are some evidences of being filled with the Spirit, according to verses 18-21? Do these things characterize your life? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Aha! Now we get to where the rubber meets the road. What is the instruction to wives in verses 22-24? \_\_\_\_\_ What is the model for this earthly relationship? \_\_\_\_\_ Do you see any "exception" clauses here—some instance when this command would not be appropriate? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Verse 22 says that when you submit to your husband, you also submit to Someone else. Does this change your outlook in any way? \_\_\_\_\_  
Yes, this is the twenty-first century. But does the teaching of Scripture get out of date? \_\_\_\_  
How do these commandments play out in your family? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Can you think of an example or a time when you have put this Scripture into practice? \_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



*Carol Reid lives the hope of His calling. Wife, mother and grandmother, she knows the home calling well. The August 2009 wedding of her younger son added a new dimension to her calling—a true empty-nester. She's explored her calling in the church from several perspectives—as a former pastor's wife, Sunday school teacher, WAC group leader and church musician at Cross Timbers FWB Church, Nashville, TN, where she and her family have worshiped for nearly 30 years. Carol enjoys sewing crafts, literature and laughter.*