



The Salvation Army
NZ, Fiji, Tonga & Samoa
Women's Ministries

WOMEN OF DESTINY BIBLE STUDY

CALLING WOMEN TO DEEP FAITH
AND DISCIPLESHIP





WOMEN OF DESTINY BIBLE STUDY

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AND DISCIPLESHIP
EDITION 1

Written by Salvationist Colleen Marshall
Produced by The Salvation Army Women's Ministries
New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa Territory



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WomenOfDestiny



D.

WOMEN OF DESTINY STUDY

*'We are made for larger ends than Earth can encompass.
Oh, let us be true to our exalted destiny.'*
- Catherine Booth, co-founder of The Salvation Army

Go back 150 years to the East End of London.

A striking young man is drawn to the streets,
where mobs of destitute humanity lie
surrounded in squalor and lost in hopelessness.

He is moved with compassion, telling them of Jesus.
The people eagerly respond.

Catherine Booth is William's partner in ministry and life. She shares his joy as he says, 'Darling, I have found my destiny!' Catherine takes up the vision, securing funds from high society and extending the hand of friendship to the lowly through preaching and prayer.

From now on their lives have one focus: to bring salvation to the masses, their hearts aflame with love and Christ. The Salvation Army is born, and countless thousands of people have been won for the kingdom of God.

Q. Can you say you have found your destiny?
What is your life's purpose as you see it?
Is it a clear picture or a bit fuzzy?

Mark and explain the number that best applies to you:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Floundering

I am feeling unsure about the 'season' I am in and unsure of what's ahead. I don't have a clear vision.

Focused

I have a clear sense of direction for my life. I am taking intentional steps in order to get there.

Fruitful

I am mature in faith, mentoring and leading others to Christ. I have spiritually-enriching personal relationships.



DESTINY

implies having a destination, a personal vision for where your life is going and knowing the traits and achievements you want to mark your life.

What does 'women of destiny' suggest to you?

What are you passionate about?

What do you want to be said about you when your days are over?

We will journey by working backward from the destination. We will figure out where you would like to be, where you are coming from and what it will take to get there. The Bible will be our guidebook and map.

D.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE:

*devoted dynamic
determined discerning
disciplined discreet
discipled daring*

Women of destiny have a deep sense of God's hand on their lives. They demonstrate the power of a godly life.

WOMEN OF DESTINY

dream of the future. They are in pursuit of God's will for themselves and their future, their community and our world.

WOMEN OF DESTINY

are diligent in following Jesus and studying the Word. They are never too old to develop themselves further and learn new things. They are confident in declaring what they know to be true.

WOMEN OF DESTINY

'delight themselves in the Lord', and are 'doers of the Word, and not hearers only.' - James 1.22

MEMORISE

'His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever he tells you.'"
- John 2:5

READ

'Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.'
- 2 Timothy 2:15

We will all face an accounting of our lives before God. We all want God's approval and 'well done'. Until then, each of us has a personal responsibility to develop ourselves as dynamic disciples. (See also 2 Peter 1:5, 2 Peter 1:10, 2 Peter 3:14)

Hans Urs von Balthasar said 'What you are is God's gift to you, what you become is your gift to God.'
The following verses bring to mind visions and practical steps we must take, in order to grow in determination, devotion and diligence.

2 Timothy 2:15

Present yourself:

Psalm 37:4

Delight yourself:

Jude 23

Keep yourself:

1 Timothy 4:16

Watch yourself:

1 Timothy 4:7

Train yourself to:

1 Timothy 4:13

Devote yourself to:

1 Timothy 4:15

Give yourself:





Mark on the graph where you are now, and where you would like to be.

This diagram is a simple way to reveal to ourselves where we need some diligence in loving others and God, and where we are doing well. We can ask Holy Spirit to help us do better!



WOMEN OF DESTINY CHARACTER STUDY

Q. What made these women stand out?

Deborah
Judges 4-5

Dorcas
Acts 9:36-42

What happens when dreams are derailed?

How do we recognise and deal with distractions?

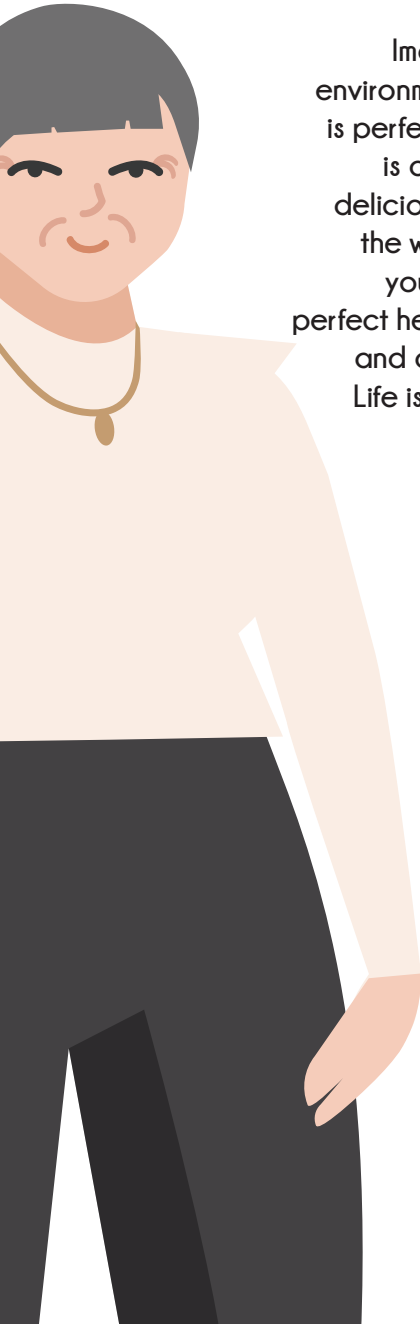
How do we defy and defeat the enemy?

REFLECT & PRAY

Think about what you would most like God to develop in you. Tell someone else, and check in over the week to see how you get on.

E.

WOMEN OF DESTINY STUDY



Imagine waking up in an environment where everything is perfect. Everything! Nature is at her best, the food is delicious, the air is pure and the water runs clear. It's all yours to enjoy. You have perfect health, perfect features and a perfect relationship. Life is idyllic and pure bliss.

This was Eve's
experience
until

(see Genesis 1-3)

A godly young couple longed for a baby to complete their happiness. All their prayers seemed to be in vain. Years went by. Their nest remained empty.

This was Elizabeth's
experience
until

(see Luke 1-2)

WOMEN OF DESTINY EMBRACE THEIR EXPERIENCE

We will find our destiny when we embrace our own experience, the 'race that is set before us.'
(Hebrews 12:1)

We are not called to run someone else's race or pick up someone else's cross.

A young girl is orphaned and her older cousin takes her in. She has a lonely childhood but a strong sense of God's purpose is instilled in her.

This was Esther's
experience
until

(see Esther 1-9)

Q. Do you ever envy women who seem to have the perfect life?

'Embrace your own race, and you'll grow in grace. Even more, you will glow in grace.

You'll notice that everything falls into place, and God is suddenly on your case. The challenges you face move you forward, from first base to second, third, fourth base. Each requires a different pace. The home run is in sight. Ace!

E.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE:

*exceptional earnest
enthused eternal
entrusting expectant
esteeming epic*

Women of destiny rise up on eagles' wings, eagerly striving for excellence in all we do until we reach eternity.

Maybe this person has a relationship, or children, or a house that could feature in any magazine. Maybe they're free of the chronic disease that plagues you, or they don't appear to have those fractured relationships you might experience. Everything they touch turns to gold... or so it looks to you!

In your dreams! Those who seem to have it all may well carry heartaches and face challenges you know nothing about. We are not to envy others, but pray for and bless them, while asking for our comfort and contentment from God.

Q. You are writing your own eulogy. What are some phrases you want to include?

Q. What does endurance imply? Do you long for an easy life? What kind of person would that make you?

Hebrews 12:2-3 talks about e _____, and keeping your e ___ fixed on Jesus.

He has brought you to this life of faith, set a destiny before you, and is committed to your success.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ENDURE

Our endurance is not one of drudgery, but an endurance of 'hanging in there' and trusting God in spite of all odds and all else.

Each experience empowers and equips us to live an effective and God-honouring lifestyle, whatever our lot in life. We can choose to enjoy life, encourage others, establish good foundations through the exercise of holy habits (1 Tim 4:7) and follow the example of Jesus and people of faith. We choose belief and joy, not fear.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ENDEAVOUR TO:

2 Peter 3:14

Colossians 4:6

Hebrews 12:14

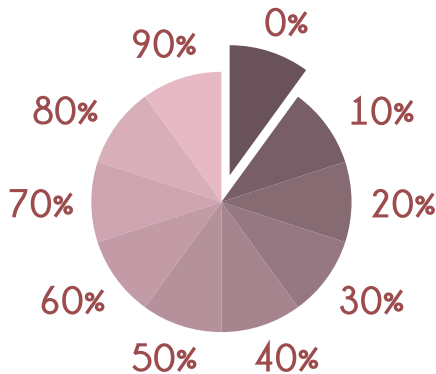
Luke 13:24

2 Peter 1:5-7, 10

Hebrews 4:11

WHAT ARE YOU FIXING YOUR EYES ON?

Select what percentage of time you spend viewing helpful spiritual content.



Jesus performed miracles by opening the eyes of the blind. The people wanted new sight, new vision and a new perspective on life. They were enveloped in a world of darkness. We too can be blinded by difficulties, comforts or envying others. Our spirits become blind when we fail to keep our eyes fixed on Jesus.



Q. When the eyes of our understanding are enlightened, what will happen? (Eph 1:18)

*'Oh, be careful
little eyes
what you see,
Oh, be careful
little eyes
what you see,
For the Father up above
is looking down in love,
So be careful
little eyes
what you see.'
- Anon.*

Q. What do the following verses tell us about our eyes and ears?

Luke 11:34

Proverbs 4:25-27

Ephesians 1:18

Matthew 7:3-5

Proverbs 18:15

Matthew 13:16-17

Instead of judging others with our own eyes, we should look at them how Jesus does. With eyes of compassion and grace we will become more generous and kind, and see the best in others rather than the worst.

The way you choose to 'see' and 'hear' others affects your attitude and how you interpret the world. With eyes of faith we will see God's hand in our past and look at the future with hope and possibility.

REFLECT & PRAY

Ask God for eyes to see the world like God does, and ears to hear the Holy Spirit's voice. Reflect and pick a challenge to undertake to make this happen.



S.

WOMEN OF DESTINY STUDY

Q. What has stood out for you since we began this series?

Q. What does being women of destiny mean to you, now?

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE STRENGTHENED

Being a woman of destiny calls for a stock-take. Are you sure of God's purpose for your life, or are you stalled and struggling?

Complete the scriptures below. What do you most need to be encouraged in?

Isaiah 40:31

Renewed strength for:

Isaiah 41:10

Promises that:

Psalms 46:1

God is:

Psalms 118:14

The Lord is:

Nehemiah 8:10

The joy:

Philippians 4:13

I can:



When we find ourselves side-tracked, deep soul-searching may be necessary. In the stillness, seeking God will renew our strength, security and peace. God is our succor and shield. God speaks. God shelters us in life's storms, when we feel vulnerable and afraid. What do you need to seek afresh from God today to feel secure and surrounded?

In every season of our spiritual journey God's strength sustains us.

IN SHAME STRESS SORROW SICKNESS STALENESS SUFFERING STRUGGLE SKEPTICISM STAGNANCY STRANGENESS SUPPLICATION
IN SAFETY SUCCESS STILLNESS SECURITY STRENGTH STABILITY SIMPLICITY SUBMISSION SACREDNESS SATISFACTION

Q. Which of these words speak to you?

Q. For what purpose does God give us strength?

Satan comes to steal, kill and destroy (John 10:10). There is a spiritual battle for the souls of all people. Satan is our enemy who wants us to stumble and fall, distracting us so our faith will starve, accusing us so we become discouraged.

But God gives us strength! We will survive and overcome, standing firm to the end. The war is won. We have success in Christ and access to all Jesus' glorious inheritance!

S.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE:

spiritual sincere saved-to-serve self-motivated self-disciplined studious shining as stars salt

Women of destiny are women of standing who know the 'secret of being content' in God. (Phil 4:12, Prov 31)

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE SPIRITUAL WARRIORS.

*Read and memorise
Ephesians 6:10-18
and answer:*



Ephesians 6:10

Be strong in:

Ephesians 6:11

Stand against:

Ephesians 6:12

We wrestle:

Ephesians 6:13

We need God's:

Ephesians 6:15

Shoes of:

Ephesians 6:16

Shield of faith to:

Q. Why is it a 'helmet of salvation'?
What is the 'sword of the spirit'?
What is 'praying in the spirit'?

A woman of destiny knows her strengths and weaknesses. Circle where you feel you rate in these areas from 1 (low) to 10 (high).

self confidence	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
self awareness	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
self control	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
self discipline	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
self esteem	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
self motivation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

Q. Which of these is highest for you?

Q. How will you strengthen your weaker areas?

WOMEN OF DESTINY SPEAK SACREDLY

Positive and negative self-talk is the difference between *sweet and sour* in setting the tone for your day or environment. Do you ever wake up snarky, scratchy, stony-silent or sarcastic? Others know to skedaddle and keep a safe distance from you when you're feeling this type of way!

We have the remote control to our own disposition and can 'select' which mood we will indulge: *sweet* or *sour*. How do you change channels to process the negative self-talk, emotions or feeling?

WOMEN OF DESTINY SAVOUR SCRIPTURE

Read and summarise
Ephesians 4:29-32

WOMEN OF DESTINY SPEAK UP

Write down what Proverbs 31:8-9
says about speaking up

Psalm 23 Reflection:

*'The Lord is my Shepherd. My Shepherd, think of it!
I am his sheep. Not a lost sheep, not a black sheep,
I'm snowy white. His precious one. My Shepherd is in control,
leading me to green pastures, in paths of righteousness and
restoring my soul. He guides me through the scary shadows,
keeping me safe at his side. His staff fends off the dangers and
keeps me in step with him. My steps and my stops are ordered
by him. He sets a banquet before me. I am invited by name,
an honoured guest. Surely goodness and mercy will follow me
all the days of my life and I will dwell in the house of the Lord,
forever. Amen.'*

Q.

What would
'sweet' look like
in your home?

Which is the norm:
sweet or sour?

What does your
self-talk look like?

READ

Proverbs
15:1-4, 7, 23; 16:24

REFLECT & PRAY

Read the Psalm
23 reflection
and ask what
God wants to
show you this
week as you
worship.

T.

WOMEN OF DESTINY STUDY

Q.

1. Name one thing you have learned so far.
2. Name two women of the Bible starting with D.
3. Name three women of the Bible starting with E.

Romans 12:2 says, 'Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, in order to know the good, acceptable and perfect will of God.' Transformation begins in the mind and in our thoughts. The Bible's truth is transformational. Jesus said 'You shall know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.' - John 8:32

Satan is a thief who comes to trap and trip us in a web of untruths. His strategy is to accuse and condemn, sow doubt that God is trustworthy and tie our emotions in knots. (John 10:10)

Jesus came to declare the truth that sets us free and gives us abundant life. He will 'restore the years that the locust has eaten.' - Joel 2:25
Truth transforms wrong beliefs that might have trapped and entangled us.

'Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.' - Romans 8:1-2



WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE FREED BY THE TRUTH

Where does
condemnation
come from?

What is the result of
condemnation?

Where does
conviction
come from?

What is the
result of conviction?

T.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE:

<i>thankful</i>	<i>thoughtful</i>
<i>transformed</i>	<i>teachable</i>
<i>trained</i>	<i>trustworthy</i>
<i>tested</i>	<i>transparent</i>

Women of destiny take time to be holy and allow God's truth to transform every area of their spirit, life and faith.

John 8:2-12 *Luke 19:1-10*

The nameless woman
is shamed, condemned,
stripped and the
crowd wants to kill her.
Effectively, they were
saying:

Zacchaeus,
shunned, up a tree,
the crowd murmuring
against him and Jesus.
Effectively, they were
saying:

The *transforming truth*
is Jesus came for the
forgiveness of sins;
'I do not condemn you.'
As Jesus saw her
and forgave her,
the woman's heart was
transformed.
Hallelujah!

The *transforming truth*
is Jesus came for the
last, lost and least;
'for your salvation.'
As Jesus saw him
and loved him,
the man's heart was
transformed.
Hallelujah!

You.

Think about your own life, your
unmet needs, wrong beliefs,
unhealed hurts and accusations.
Effectively, this pain is
saying:

The *transforming truth* is
God treasures you.

*'I delight over you with singing. You
are the apple of my eye. I died for
you, all is forgiven; go free in my
name. You are my beloved, loved
since conception. I am your father,
you are no longer an orphan.'*

And your heart is
transformed.

Hallelujah!



*Luke 8:41-56
tells the story of
two women
transformed by a touch
from the Lord.*

THE GIRL

who lay
dying.

Jairus was her father's name, and he begged Jesus to come heal his twelve year old daughter. But Jesus arrived too late it seems; the mourners were already in full throttle. What do verses 54-55 say? Another life transformed by Jesus' touch. A home transformed.

Q.

Do you have unresolved issues you'd like to touch Jesus for?

When? Today? Tomorrow?

Do you want to talk further about this?

Will you reach out to God?

WOMEN OF DESTINY REACH OUT AND TOUCH GOD

THE WOMAN

with the issue
of blood.

Twelve years of suffering, a tiresome treadmill of treatments where the men robbed her of money and left her still sick. Her life was transformed when she desperately touched Jesus' robe. Then Jesus turns to the throng - 'Who touched me? I felt power go out from me?' That trembling touch transformed her life.

WOMEN OF DESTINY TAKE TIME TO BE HOLY

Being a Christian is not about seeking self-righteousness, but seeking God's holiness.

Q. If you knew your days were numbered, how would you use your time?

We are not superior to others, but humbly and totally devoted to God. Through thick and thin, trials and testings, we obey and love God. Taking time to be holy means talking to God about anything and everything that happens, treating the Word of God with reverence and teaching others about God's grace.

WOMEN OF DESTINY DEVELOP THANKFULNESS

READ

Luke 17:11-19

Q.

Where were the men from?
How do you think Jesus felt?
Is it hard to say thanks?

Thankfulness is transformational. Taking time to thank God is a top priority of a woman of destiny. Thankfulness tells God and others that we value their presence and purpose in our lives, and makes us more grateful in return.

Thankfulness teaches our hearts to trust God.

Name people who influenced your life for good:

Q.

Have you ever thanked these people?
Have you contacted them lately?
Whose list might you be on?

Write what you thank God for today:

REFLECT & PRAY

This week, practice giving thanks in everything and see how it transforms your mind. We are women of destiny in training for transformation. Take time to be holy, take the Word of God seriously and treat others well.

I.

WOMEN OF DESTINY STUDY

- Q.** 1. What transformational truths are you practicing now?
2. How are you thinking of yourself as a woman of destiny?



WOMEN OF DESTINY:

- are *intercessors*, seeking Holy Spirit's guidance.
- develop holy *imaginings* through time with God and scripture, utilising their spiritual gifts.
- are *illuminators*, preaching the Word of God.
- offer holy *input*, even if they feel *inadequate*.
- are known for their *integrity* in every season.
- are not *indifferent* to suffering and injustice, even when it doesn't affect them personally.
- are not *immune* to the ups and downs of life, but are vulnerable and honest with others.
- happily *impart* what God has taught them.
- have good *intake*: body, mind and spirit.
- are bold enough to follow their *initiative*.
- can both give and follow *instructions*.
- are not *idle*, nor unsustainably busy.
- have their *identity* rooted in God.
- are of *inestimable importance*.
- always seek to be *intentional*.
- have a heavenly *inheritance*.
- have faith that is *infectious*.
- do not *isolate* themselves.
- are *indignant* at *injustice*.
- are people of *influence*.
- regularly *invest* in others.

**WOMEN OF
DESTINY
MAKE AN
IMPACT!**

WOMEN OF DESTINY INCREASE THEIR KNOWLEDGE OF SCRIPTURE.

Complete the
scriptures listed.

SHARE

Share an experience
when one of these verses
has helped you.

Q. Which verse is the
most challenging
for you? Why?
Write that verse
out this week.



WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE:

inspirational *intentional*
innovative *inclusive*
intelligent *inquisitive*
industrious *informed*

Women of destiny are
incredible individuals, whose
names are inscribed on the
palms of God.

In all your ways acknowledge him and

Prov. 3:6

In all these things we are more than

Rom. 8:37

I can do all things through Christ who

Phil. 4:13

I am fearfully and wonderfully

Psa. 139:14

If anyone is in Christ, they are a new

2 Cor. 5:17

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to

1 Jhn. 1:9

*'Do not store up for yourselves
treasures on earth, where moths
and vermin destroy, and where
thieves break in and steal. But
store up for yourselves treasures in
heaven, where moths and vermin do
not destroy, and where thieves do
not break in and steal.'*

- Matthew 6:19-20

Q. What does this scripture
say to you?

INVEST IN YOURSELF

Investing in yourself is not selfish; it's a concept from God. Looking after ourselves is having rest, recreation and reflection. We are to enrich our mind, evaluating where we're at, carving out space to create, dream up new ideas and feel accomplished in what we turn our hands to.

INVEST WITH YOUR TIME

Use your time to build the kingdom of God. Grow relationships with young people, mentor and upskill others. Spend time intentionally listening and getting to know people, especially the lonely and unusual. Weigh up your options carefully to use time well. Also, resist the urge to serve non-stop or be simply a 'yes woman'.

WOMEN OF INFLUENCE INTENTIONALLY INVEST

Q. Who/what are you investing in?

INVEST WITH YOUR TALENTS

Reflect on what you are good at. We are all good at something! How are you developing what God has given you and using your talents for his glory? In what ways? Have you hidden your light under a bushel?

INVEST WITH YOUR TREASURE

Are you able to support causes which spread the Gospel through the world? How can we invest our money in others in a godly manner and as a good steward? What will happen to all we accumulate here on earth?



WOMEN OF DESTINY INFLUENCE CHANGE

1 Samuel 25

Abigail saved:

Book of Ruth

Ruth comforted:

Book of Esther

Esther delivered:

Acts 18:26

Priscilla taught:

**‘I
DREAM OF
AN ARMY
THAT IS
SPIRITUALLY
VIBRANT,
BIBLICALLY
STRONG,
CULTURALLY
SENSITIVE,
EVANGELISTICALLY
PASSIONATE,
COMMUNITY
CONCERNED
AND HOLY SPIRIT
EMPOWERED.**

Such a Spirit-filled Army will be ready to sacrifice and serve in obedience to Christ's commission, and through a strong prayer life be open to the changes the Holy Spirit is ready to initiate in our strategies for the future.’
- General Eva Burrows

WOMEN OF DESTINY HAVE GOD-GIVEN IMAGINATIONS

*What is your
God-inspired dream
for yourself, corps
and your community?*

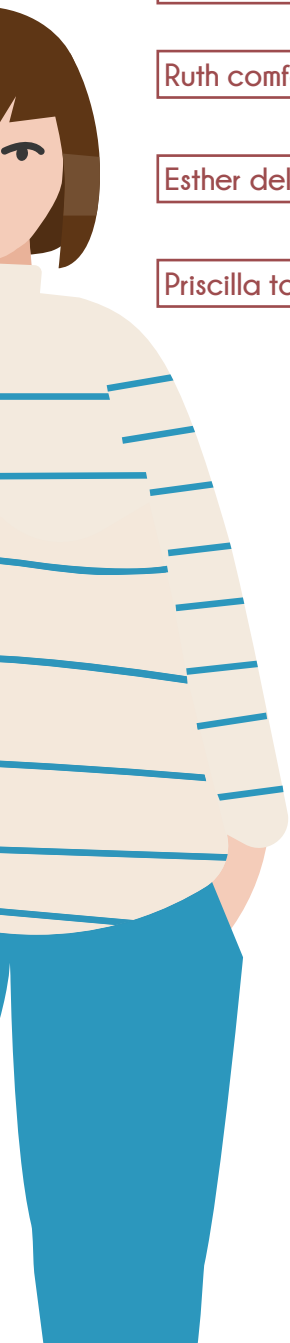
If money were
no object, I would:

If I ever got the
opportunity, I would:

If I knew I would be
successful, I would:

REFLECT & PRAY

This week, pray for opportunities to invest in others and yourself, through your relationship with God. Pray for intimate moments with loved ones and restoration with enemies. May God's peace be upon you.



N.

WOMEN OF DESTINY STUDY

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE NAVIGATORS

'So the two women went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they arrived in Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them, and the women exclaimed, 'Can this be Naomi?'" - Ruth 1:19

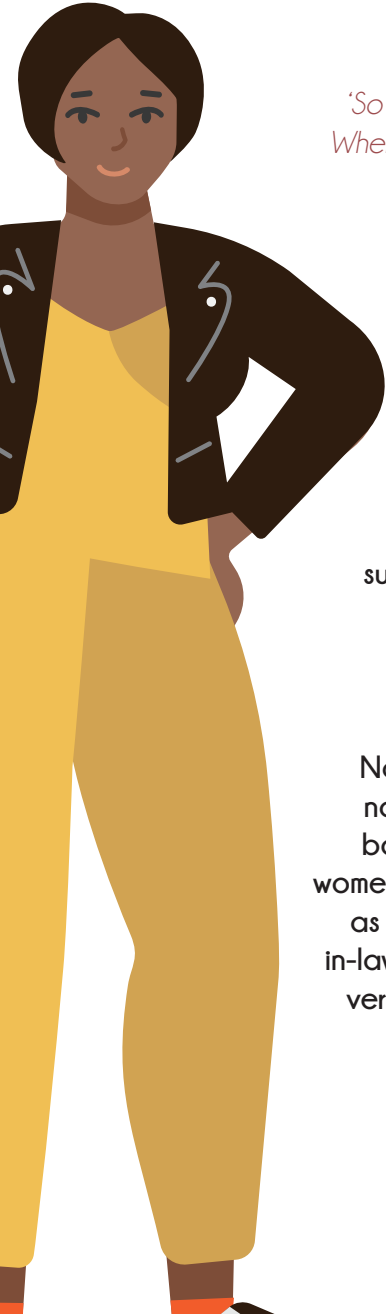
Let us turn to the book of Ruth and see how God transformed Naomi's journey from hardship into hope. Even when Naomi felt abandoned, God was with her and had a plan - she was not forgotten! We read that Naomi's city suffered a terrible famine, so she set out to Moab with her two sons and her husband, Elimilech, for a better life. After they had arrived Elimilech died suddenly and Naomi was left with two sons to raise, miles away from home, money and family.

Q. Have you ever gone through a period of hardship in your life?

Naomi's sons grew up to marry two Moabite women named Orpah and Ruth. Tragedy struck again, and both sons died! In the male-supremacist culture, the women would lose all they owned and their inheritance as they had no male heir. Naomi and her daughters-in-law were now each husbandless, childless and very, very vulnerable to violence, poverty and starvation.

'The Lord Himself has raised His fist against me.'
- Ruth 1:13b NLT

Can you imagine how Naomi would have felt? Has your world ever 'crumbled'? Have you ever known a grief so deep you felt no hope?



For ten long years life had been a bitter struggle. It must have seemed like there was little purpose, wasting away in the prime of their life. 'Was it a mistake to go to Moab?', Naomi must have agonised. 'Look what came out of it! Nothing but sorrow'. So when the news reached Naomi that her homeland had prospered, she decided to return home with Orpah and Ruth. But Naomi quickly realised she had nothing to offer these women - no wealth to inherit or sons to marry. She instead insisted that they go back to their families, their gods and the security of their own homes. She released them with her blessing.

'Go, return each of you to your mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you.'
- Ruth 1:8-9

Orpah agreed to leave, but Ruth refused, pleading with Naomi and pledging herself to follow her, always.

'Urge me not to leave you or to turn back from following you; for where you go I will go, and where you lodge I will lodge. Your people shall be my people and your God my God.'
- Ruth 1:16-17

N.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE:

noble *numerous*
neighbourly *navigators*
nourished *nomads*
non-uniform *notable*

Women of destiny know that when we are spiritually nourished and connected, we can love God and others well.

WOMEN OF DESTINY

know that 'the only constant is change.' They prepare for life's journeys and to be flexible, even when the unexpected happens.

WOMEN OF DESTINY

understand that while we might not see the purpose or plan, God's hand is at work. Sorrows and trouble will come, but we take heart for Christ has overcome the world.

WOMEN OF DESTINY

commit ourselves, our homes, our people, our faith and our eternity, to God. We know where God goes, we go. Forever.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE SPIRITUAL NOMADS

Q.

Have there been times in your life when you've thought 'The Lord Himself has raised His fist against me?' Share with the group.

Has your life had some seemingly 'wasted years', years the 'locust has eaten'? Sorrow upon sorrow, nothing productive to show? How did that truly feel?

See Ruth 1:20-21.

Can you think of other Bible women who felt the same? What was the outcome?

'Do not call me Naomi [pleasant]; call me Mara [bitter], for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, but the Lord has brought me home again empty.'
- Ruth 1:20-21

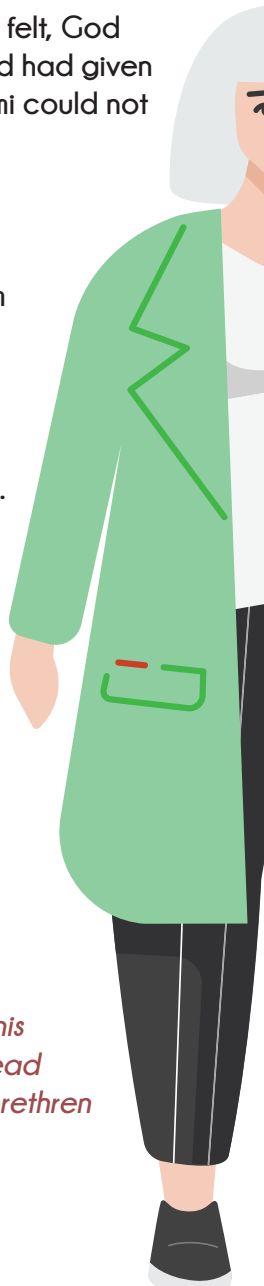
Regardless of how Naomi may have felt, God had not utterly abandoned her. God had given her Ruth as a ray of hope, but Naomi could not see it. All she could see was her own pain.

Sometimes when we are in our darkest hour, all we can see is doom and gloom. We cannot see God at work alongside us in our darkness.

God had not abandoned Naomi and would not let her be destroyed. God had a plan to restore her and bring her hope in an unexpected way. Ruth went out to work in the fields to support them. Naomi asked whose field Ruth worked in, and the answer jogged her memory!

'Boaz! Of course!' A ray of hope dawned, because Boaz was related to Naomi's husband. Under Jewish law, if Boaz married her son's widow, it would

'[R]estore the name of the dead to his inheritance, that the name of the dead may not be cut off from among his brethren and from the gate of his birthplace.'
- Ruth 4:10



Whatever child born to Ruth and Boaz would be considered Naomi's grandchild, and restore her family's lineage, security and future.

And a child was born. Naomi's grandson was Obed, the grandfather of King David, the ancestor of Jesus Christ. God did not leave Naomi empty as she had thought. God used her to bless the world. God had a plan to give Naomi 'beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness' - Isaiah 61:3.

And, God can do the same thing for you.

Naomi could not possibly have imagined what her destiny would be, or that God had chosen her family to be part of the lineage of the promised Messiah.

What legacy would you say Naomi has left for us as women of God?

Q. *Describe Naomi's qualities as a mother-in-law. (Ruth 3:16; 4:15)*

Even though Naomi was bringing Ruth home with her, why did she feel she was coming home completely empty?

What can we learn from her incorrect assumption?

Why do you think it is significant that Naomi was not only blessed with a grandchild, but an ancestor of Christ? What does that tell us about what happens when God restores us?

REFLECT & PRAY

Reflect on your answers to this study and the thoughts of your group. What new thinking process are you going to start this week? How are you going to treat your experiences differently? Ask God to speak and be present in hardships.



Y.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE YOKED AND YIELDED

Y is for YOU! Whether you follow God's destiny for you or detour into plans of your own making, the freedom of choice rests with you. But guess who's cheering you on, pushing you to do right thing, breathing life and hope and daring and courage into you.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE YOKED AND YIELDED

Matthew 11:29-30

A yoke is the name for the harness that joins two animals carrying a load.

Often the loads are very heavy and the animals exert all their strength.

At times the yokes rub against their shoulders, producing troublesome sores.

When yoked together, the two animals must go in the same direction and be united in their efforts.

Being yielded and yoked is being joined in a partnership.

If we yield to being yoked to the Saviour, we are partners with Jesus in labour for the kingdom.

Christ is so much stronger! When teamed with him, we won't need to struggle to do our part. The Saviour's yoke is easy and burden is light.

What a marvelous analogy, that we should go in the same direction as the Saviour! Going with God teaches us.

The Lord is partnering with us and setting the pace for the yoked and yielded.



To what extent are you 'yielded and yoked' to the Lord?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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Not at all

I am not in a place to trust God. I am unsure if what God says is true. I haven't thought deeply about this yet.

Kind of


There are parts of my life that I trust God with. I sometimes feel that God is leading me. I follow God sometimes.

Fully

I am obedient and try very often to seek God and build the kingdom of God. I am always learning.

Q. What areas are you yet to yield to God in?

Q. What practices can you begin, to change that?



Y.

WOMEN OF DESTINY ARE:

yielded in obedience to God, youthful through our Holy Spirit, yoked to Jesus Christ and yearning for God's kingdom.

Women of destiny step up to their place in the priesthood of all believers, ministering wherever God calls them.

MEMORISE *John 15:4-8*

Q. What kind of harvest has God grown in your life since following Christ?

READ *Mark 4:13-20*



stony path
verse 15



rocky ground
verse 16



thistles
verse 18



good soil
verse 20

Q.

Which of these types of 'ground' describes your walk with God?

What can you do to change from one 'soil' to another?

WOMEN OF DESTINY, TRAIN YOURSELVES!

In the first study of Women of Destiny, we looked at personal responsibility for developing ourselves. Have you changed at all in the course of this study? Discuss with your group what scriptures influenced this. What do these scriptures have to say about our behaviour?

1 Timothy 4:7

Train yourself to:

1 Timothy 4:13

Devote yourself to:

1 Timothy 4:15

Give yourself:

1 Timothy 4:16

Watch your:

1 Peter 5:6

Humble yourselves:

Psalms 37:4

Delight yourself:

Romans 6:13

Offer yourselves:

Jude 20:20-21

Build yourselves:

Romans 6:13

Keep yourselves:

Jude 1:21

Present yourselves:





WOMEN OF DESTINY YEARN FOR GOD

'As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?' - Psalm 42:1-2

Q.

What are the yearnings of your heart?

Have you taken the time to listen?

Our heart speaks to us. What is yours saying to you? Sometimes the word is 'slow down a bit.'

When life is a mad rush, the yearning of our spirit can be quenched and the result may be dryness, emptiness and barrenness.

The yearning of our spirit and our Holy Spirit will always be to go after God.

WOMEN OF DESTINY SAY YES!

A young woman was once startled by an angel telling her she was chosen by God. Something huge was planned; she had been chosen to bear the Son of God!

If she chose to accept God's call, she would become an unmarried, pregnant, teenage girl whose fiancée might leave her and whose family might abandon her.

But Mary trusted God. She loved God. She had faith in God. So her answer in the face of the impossible was to say...

YES!

READ

Luke 2:26-38

In every generation, God is looking for bold warriors of the faith who will say

YES!

WILL YOU?

Are you a woman with a destination in mind, yielded to God and yoked to God's will? Then join us and say

YES!

**I AM A
WOMAN OF
DESTINY!**



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