

## The Power of a Positive Woman Leader's Guide

### Helpful Hints for Leaders

As you embark on studying *The Power of a Positive Woman* as a group, I would like to offer you encouragement in three areas.

1. Seek God's guidance. Ask God to assist you in how to lead your precious group of moms. You may not know all of the needs and hidden hurts of the women in your group, but God does. Seek God's wisdom as you lead your group (James 1:5).
2. Build relationships. This is not only a study to help everyone learn to be more positive in their homes; it is also a study to encourage mom-to-mom friendships. Plan fellowships, play groups and lunches together. As the leader, keep up with the moms who do not attend by giving them a quick phone call or writing them a letter. You may even want to share emails, so you can communicate easily through out the week.
3. Stay Focused. Be sensitive to everyone's time, by starting and ending on time. I do think it is wise to allow a little time for arrival and fellowship at the beginning. There is a healthy balance of staying on target and not being too rigid. Please guard against gossip or griping. You will also need to be aware of people who manipulate the conversation time or take the lesson down a rabbit trail. In both cases, turn the conversation back to the lesson by saying something like, "Well, I think we better get back to the questions so we can cover everything we want to cover."

Before you begin you will want to prayerfully make a decision as to how you will study the book. I suggest that you assign one chapter per week, plus the Power Points. You may choose to ask the questions from the leader's guide when you meet together, or you can give the questions out each week and allow the girls to come prepared with answers. These are simple discussion questions allowing the girls to share their own insights or personal examples. Don't expect everyone to answer. Allow several people to answer and then move on to the next question. Always be prepared to give your own answer, if the conversation needs help in getting started. If you have extra time, go back through the chapter and ask people to share some of the things that were important to them. Encourage them to highlight in their books. You may also want to discuss the Power Points.

If you are leading a large group (say 15 or more) you may want to have an assistant or two. It is helpful to have a secretary to collect and organize the phone numbers and addresses and perhaps a hospitality person to organize snacks and socials.

As far as praying together, I suggest you start off your time together with prayer, but reserve taking prayer requests until the end of class. Have index cards available so ladies can write their requests. Then give the card to someone else to pray for the requests. This helps to avoid long discussions (with everyone adding their opinion) over a prayer request or concern.

### Introduction

Use this first meeting as a time to get to know one another. You will be introducing the book and how you plan to study it together at this time. Do not expect anyone to have read the book yet.

1. Ask everyone to share their name and tell about a little about themselves (hometown, family members, work, etc.).
2. Read the introduction together, having one person read it out loud while the others follow along.
3. Explain how you are going to study the book together (homework and study questions).

Other things to discuss include: where you are going to meet, time frame and childcare.

Close with prayer.

### Chapter 1 It's a Girl Thing

1. God didn't form woman from the dust of the ground as he did man and beast? Why might God have chosen to fashion woman differently?
2. How did God use both Eve's strengths and weaknesses for an eternal purpose?
3. Which of the women in this chapter who exemplified qualities that God used in great and lasting ways inspired you the most and why?
4. In what ways can God use your strengths for a greater purpose?

## Chapter 2 A Perfect Fit

1. As positive women, how can we abide in Christ?
2. In what areas do we depend on our own strength and power to live our lives?
3. Sometimes waiting on the Lord can be hard to do. Have you ever pleaded with God to change someone in a certain area, and when immediate changes didn't occur, you took on the job of "holy nudger"?
4. How can our need to be in control of a person or a situation actually be a reflection of our lack of faith in God to protect us, lead us, and provide for us in his timing?

## Chapter 3 The Race of Life

1. In Luke 7, John the Baptist experienced a time of questioning as he sat in a prison cell. Have you ever had a time in your life when you've questioned, "Can God be trusted"?
2. As you have walked with God, in what ways have you found that he faithfully leads you according to his plan?
3. As positive women, how does it encourage you to know that God can take someone with a sordid past, such as Rahab, and elevate her to a great woman of faith?
4. Have you had a time in your life when you set a goal, prepared for it and accomplished it? Will you share it with the group?

## Chapter 4 Spiritual Makeover

1. As a positive woman of faith, how has your behavior begun to change to reflect your beliefs?
2. Why should living a life based on faith in Christ look different than a life lived for self and the here-and-now?

3. Many women have grown accustomed to worry in their lives. What role does faith play in vanishing worry and living fearlessly?

4. What would our lives look like if they were characterized by less worry and more faith?

## Chapter 5 More Precious Than Rubies

1. Why is it a truer saying that "Wisdom is power" than "Knowledge is power"?

2. Why must wisdom include a healthy fear of the Lord?

3. Describe a time when you prayed for God to grant you wisdom and how he answered that prayer.

4. Share your list that you composed comparing reasons people may choose to reject wisdom and the benefits of pursuing wisdom.

## Chapter 6 Winning Wisdom

1. Proverbs 3:5-6 says, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight." What happens when we yield to our own paths according to our own understanding?

2. Joni Eareckson Tada has said, "When we reach beyond our comfort zones and embrace the unlikely, people are blessed by the realization that we are all richer when we recognize our poverty, we are strong when we see our weaknesses, and we are recipients of God's grace when we understand our desperate need of him." Share how God has taught you these truths.

3. Discuss the behavior that we can expect from a woman receiving The Gold Ring in the Pig's Snout Award.

4. Read about the woman in Proverbs 31:10-31. Share and discuss your list of some of the activities and behaviors that indicate that the Proverbs 31 woman had wisdom, direction and discretion.

## Chapter 7 Extra Baggage

1. What can lighten our load as we carry our own "baggage" through life?
2. How does the parable about the persistent widow in Luke 18:2-8 inspire us to bring our cares, concerns, burdens, and injustices to God in prayer?
3. Please share a time when God answered your prayer with "no" or "wait." Describe how you are now thankful for that answer.
4. Share your hopes for applying the ASK principle in your life. Pray with your group and ask God to help and direct each one of you.

## Chapter 8 A Simple Guide to Effective Prayer

1. Vincent de Paul said, "We should spend as much time in thanking God for his benefits as we do in asking him for them." How might our prayer life with God change if we spent more time in gratitude and less time in grumbling?
2. What significant role does forgiveness play in a believer's life as she comes to the Lord in prayer?
3. What are some different ways that God speaks to us as we go to him in prayer?
4. What is the difference between persistence in prayer and worrying?

## Chapter 9 Experiencing Joy

1. Talk about the difference between happiness and joy. Give examples from your own life.
2. What effect might it have on the unbelieving world if they could see the evidence of joy in our lives on a daily basis?
3. If joy is something we receive from the Lord, do we have any responsibility in obtaining it?

4. Please share a time in your life when you had the presence of joy even in the midst of sorrow.

## Chapter 10 My Life As a Three-Ring Circus

1. How can the word "no" be one of the most positive words you can have in your vocabulary when it comes to your schedule?
2. How can we experience the favor of God?
3. As positive women we need to focus on developing four areas of life in balance: wisdom, stature, favor with God, and favor with mankind. What can happen if we neglect one or more of these areas?
4. Has there been a time when your life seemed out of balance and you made a choice that covered up your joy? What did God teach you through this?

## Chapter 11 Friendships in the Fast Lane

1. How can we make relationships a priority and cultivate new friendships?
2. Read over the list of seven relationship ingredients. Share which ones have been significant in your own friendships.
3. Why might maintaining meaningful relationships mean having fewer of them?
4. Tell the group about one of your inner-circle friendships. How did your friendship develop? Has God used that relationship to teach you more about Him, to help minister to others or to reflect his love to others?

## Chapter 12 Creative Compassion

1. Why might we have expected the despised Samaritan man to ignore the injured man? What might have happened in his life to inspire his kindness, generosity and sacrifice?
2. Why do we learn more from someone's example than their words?

3. A story in this chapter describes a daughter who is going through a difficult time. After her mother listens patiently she asks, "What are you doing for other people?" Why is this such a wise question?

4. In what ways has God's love become visible to everyone around you?

### Chapter 13 High Heels on a Dirt Road

1. Why does faith in an all-powerful God increase our capacity for courage?

2. In the book of Judges, Deborah didn't focus on her overwhelming enemies but on a powerful God. What enemies are hindering you -- fear, doubt, worry?

3. Why is the statement, "God is with you", one of the greatest motivational statements ever uttered?

4. Discuss the courage of Lisa Beamer when she says, "If my choice is to live in fear or to live in hope, I've chosen to live in hope."

### Chapter 14 Facing Fears

1. Fear can paralyze us. How can fear keep us from moving forward in life and making full use of the gifts and talents God has given us?

2. What is the only thing the Bible tells us to fear?

3. Why must we fear God in a reverential way before we can walk in wisdom and confidence throughout our lives?

4. Ask God to reveal areas in your life where fear has sneaked in and made a home for itself. What are the ways these fears keep you in bondage?

### Chapter 15 Stop Whining and Start Smiling

1. Why should Christians be the most optimistic people in the world?

2. Like the Israelites, do you ever get caught up in your own temporary discomforts and difficulties rather than trust in God and put your hope in his promises.

3. When we whine and complain why do we encourage doubt instead of faith?
4. Romans 12:12 says, "Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." How can this verse squelch our grumbling?

## Chapter 16 Delicious Morsels

1. Share times when words spoken by others either empowered you or discouraged you.
2. Romans 15:13 says, "May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." Give an example in your life when you have been the giver or recipient of "overflow".
3. Karol shared about volunteering at the Special Olympics with her daughters. Why is it that after serving others we find that what had seemed like major challenges in our lives before look rather minor now?
4. We all have regrets. We all make mistakes. We all have sinned. How does the following verse offer us hope? "Put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord is unfailing love and with him is full redemption." (Psalm 130:7)

## Conclusion

1. Enthusiasm is a deep longing and persistent desire to use the gifts and talents God has placed in us. How does this give us the strength and power to express our gifts and talents in a positive way that will bless others and glorify him?
2. We have all had pity parties. How does the following verse encourage us in a more positive direction? "Work hard and cheerfully at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people" (Colossians 3:23 NLT).
3. How can God's love and forgiveness encourage us to turn from our sin and begin moving again in a positive direction?
4. Which of the seven principles of a positive woman do you feel God is using to draw you closer to him and to bless and serve others?