

embrace

≡ Empowering young women on their path to purpose ≡

WMU
of Texas

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“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose.”

PHILIPPIANS 2:12–13 (NIV)



Why Embrace?

Welcome to the Embrace cohort. You are joining a group of young women who, like yourself, are seeking God's plan and purpose for their lives. You will enjoy a relationship with like-minded young women as well as journey alongside those who are more seasoned in life's journey and can encourage and mentor you along the way.

As you begin this journey, I pray that your heart will be open to God's Word, God's leading, and God's plan for your life. You will discover things about yourself. You will be challenged to open God's Word to discover what He has to say about His disciples. You will be encouraged by those who walk alongside you on the same journey of discovery.

Allow the Word, prayer, and others on the journey to encourage and inform your walk.

Be encouraged that God has uniquely created you for a purpose bigger than yourself. And He has equipped you for the calling He has for your life.

Whether you are looking at a vocational ministry, or seeking God's plan for how He wants you to serve in a secular vocation, be open to His leading as He disciplines you along this journey.

I pray that God will speak clearly and give you insights into His plan and purpose for your life.

Grace for the journey,

Teri

A Word to the Mentors

Thank you for joining the journey to walk alongside another. You may be wondering about mentoring and why it's important. However, if you are reading this, you probably already have an idea. Assuming you have some life under your belt, you already have something to offer someone on the road behind you.

Over the years, I've taught preschool girls and children, students, and women from 18 to over 100. I always encourage the women I teach to be standing in the middle.

You stand at a moment in time. You have traveled through some of life. You have experiences that have impacted and shaped you. However, you anticipate some life yet ahead of you. With one hand on each side of you, you are ready to hold the hand of another. On one side, you can look ahead. There is that woman ahead of you on your journey. She has lived life that you are yet to experience. She has gained wisdom and experience that could help you as you journey forward on your chosen path.

Then, holding your other hand is a young woman who stands behind you. She stands ready to learn things from you. She hasn't yet walked where you are. She is on the journey but could use your wisdom and encouragement as she comes behind you on the path.

Gratefully, God did not create us to live in isolation. Rather we are created and called to live in community. One of the most powerful ways for us to express community is to stand in the middle. Encouraged and instructed by one who stands ahead of us and poised to provide wisdom and guidance to one who comes behind us.

The next six sessions will give you the opportunity to experience the journey with the one behind you. You are called to walk with her, guiding her and encouraging her as she is on a journey of discovery.

What is the calling God has placed on her life? What is the purpose for which she is created? How does she learn along the path, and how are her experiences instructing her?

You have a legacy to leave. God has given you experiences and guided you in wisdom. He has shown Himself to you. Now He wants you to pass that down to a new generation.

This journey is not easy, but profoundly rewarding. As you pray and guide, you are speaking wisdom into the future. You are obediently following God's command in **Titus 2:3-5**.

How can you best prepare as a Mentor?

1. **Pray.** Ask God to give you wisdom as you come alongside the young woman He has given you to encourage.
2. **Spend time in the Word,** making sure you are providing sound teaching and training according to the truth of His Word.
3. **Be honest.** Share from your heart and experiences. Be authentic as you share your own journey, knowing that she will learn from you as you share with transparency and honesty.
4. **Be committed.** You are making a six-session commitment to spend time in the regular group sessions, as well as carving out time to spend one-on-one with your Mentee. She is counting on you to help her.
5. **This is a relationship,** not a program. Your goal is to establish an authentic, growing relationship with your Mentee. If you commit your time and prayer, God will be faithful to grow your relationship.

What can I expect from the Embrace experience?

Group Session. You will be meeting as a small group for each of the six sessions. There will be a speaker specific to each topic, followed by a small group discussion time. Each session is designed to last no more than 75 minutes.

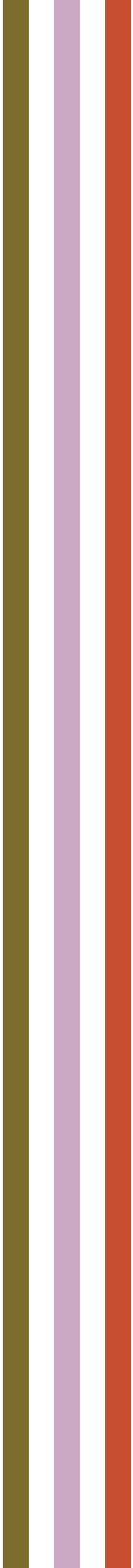
After each group session, **Mentees will complete personal reflection** material provided before meeting one-on-one with their Mentor. Each Mentor is encouraged to look over the material they are covering to answer questions or provide insights.

One-on-one Mentoring will occur between the group sessions. You may meet in person, on the phone or via video conferencing or facetime. Whatever is most convenient. You are only asked to meet one time between sessions.

Material will provide personal reflection experiences to guide your discovery each session.

Material will include discussion prompts for your time together.

Each session provides Prayer Prompts for you to share as you commit to pray for each other.



**“Yes, I am the gate.
Those who come in
through me will be
saved. They will come
and go freely and will
find good pastures.
The thief’s purpose is
to steal and kill and
destroy. My purpose
is to give them a rich
and satisfying life.”**

JOHN 10:9-10 (NLT)



Session One:

DISCOVERY

Notes

Discover Who You Are

Speaker: Licensed Professional Counselor or Minister to help explore identity in Christ

PERSONAL EVALUATION

God has given each of us a set of skills, talents, life experiences, and yes, even weaknesses and challenges, that make us unique. God desires to use all these things as we are His vessel. No matter your vocation or life's path, you have a unique set of internal and external traits and experiences that shape who you are. Before you meet with your Mentor, take a few minutes to look over these questions and answer as many of them as you would like to. Pray before you begin, asking God to show you what He wants you to see about yourself. Be honest. Be willing to explore all the questions, even though some of them may challenge you and might even be uncomfortable to consider. Make notes as you feel led.

Strengths:¹

1. What do you do best?

2. What unique knowledge, talent, and/or resources do you have?

3. What advantages do you have?

4. What do other people say you do well?

¹Humphrey, Albert. Stanford University Research Project. <https://rapidbi.com/swotanalysis/>

5. What resources do you have available?

6. What is your greatest achievement?

Weaknesses:

1. What could you improve?

2. What knowledge, talent, skills and/or resources are you lacking?

3. What disadvantages do you have?

4. What do other people say you don't do well?

5. In what areas do you need more training?

Opportunities:

1. How can you turn your strengths into opportunities?

2. How can you turn your weaknesses into opportunities?

3. Is there a need you see around you that you feel particularly moved to meet?

4. What could you do today to meet a need you see around you that isn't being met?

Threats:

1. What obstacles do you face?

2. Could any of your weaknesses prevent you from meeting your goals?

3. Who and/or what might cause problems for you in the future? How?

4. Is there anything you see today that might prevent or threaten success in areas where you feel led to minister?

Once you have answered these questions, spend some time in prayer. Ask God to show you how He sees you. How does He want to use what you've learned to lead you as you pursue ministry?

God has created you uniquely. There is no one exactly like you. You have unique gifts and strengths. You have unique weaknesses and obstacles you have encountered.

The beauty of a life surrendered to God is that He uses everything we are and all the things we have experienced to help us as we minister to others.

So many individuals whose stories are told in the Bible have failures and tragic experiences that we might think would prevent them from ministry. However, God is the great Redeemer. He not only redeems us from an eternity separated from Him, but once we've surrendered to Him, He also redeems our mistakes and experiences.

Jesus came as the ultimate Redeemer. He came to pay the price for our sin. He also came as the great Redeemer of our life on earth.

Read John 10:9-10

Jesus is speaking in these verses, telling the listeners that He is the door to salvation. He is the door to redemption from eternal death and eternal separation from God. He goes on to say, that unlike the thief who only comes to steal and destroy, He (Jesus) has come to give us abundant life. He is reminding us that He not only redeems our eternity, but He has the power and desire to redeem our here-and-now.

Feel free to record your thoughts below. You might consider the following questions as you explore who you are and who you are in Christ.

Evaluate yourself against your goal for yourself. In other words, how does

your current life/situation stack up against the calling or desire you believe God may have for your life and your future?

Questions to ponder:

- 1. From the list above, determine your greatest strength.

- 2. From the list above, determine your greatest limitation or weakness.

- 3. What opportunities are before you to help you accomplish your goal?

- 4. What threats or obstacles do you face that would stop you achieving your goal?

DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

Each session you will be challenged to consider a spiritual discipline and evaluate how well you are growing in that discipline. It is through the spiritual disciplines that we often experience God most fully.

The Spiritual discipline we will explore this session is **Bible study**. Sometimes Bible study can be the most intimidating of the disciplines. It may seem difficult or confusing. You may think you aren't able to read, understand and interpret the scripture.

But consider what the Word says. **John 14:26** tells us that *"the Helper, the*

Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you.” When you are a believer in Jesus, you have the Holy Spirit inside of you. One of the things He does is to teach you and make God’s Word alive in your life.

Sometimes it may be difficult to get started studying the Bible. But here are a few suggestions that might help you.

- **Have a plan.** Sometimes the best way to start is with a plan. Just opening the Bible and guessing where to read doesn’t provide the continuity we need to really understand the truths of the Word in context. Maybe you can find a study online. Maybe you can choose a book of the Bible and start reading one chapter at a time. Youversion is a free Bible app that has a lot of choices for daily reading and some Bible study plans as well.
- **Use study resources.** There are many commentaries and other Bible study helps available online. If there is a passage that is difficult for you to understand, you might look to a trusted commentary to help you with context or to help clarify the meaning of the original language.
- **Read a passage more than once.** When you are studying a book of the Bible, take a chapter, or even a portion of a chapter and read it through more than once. The first time, you are reading it like you would a story. The second time begin to ask questions about the passage. What does the passage reveal about the nature of God? What truths can you discover in the passage? Are there any admonitions to heed? Are there instructions to follow? Is there encouragement we are to glean? Third time reading, consider what God may be saying to you directly through the passage.
- **Write down what you think God is teaching you.** Take notes as you read and reflect. Is there something God wants you to change or correct in your own life? Is there something He wants you to commit to pray about? Is He revealing something to you about what He wants you to do?
- **Begin and end your time of study with prayer.** Open your Bible study time with prayer asking God to speak to you through His word. End your time of study in prayer asking Him to help you to obey what He has revealed to you.

Here is a good passage for you to practice.

Before you begin, pray, asking God to open your eyes to see His truth revealed in this passage.

Read 1 Peter 2:4-10

Read through the passage and observe.

Write down any key words. Often you can identify these because they are repeated often in the passage.

Read the passage again and make a note of what you learn about each of the key words. Just observe. Not time to interpret yet.

Read the passage again and write down anything specific you learn about the nature of God.

Read the passage again and record anything in the passage that you believe God is teaching you personally.

Read a final time and record any additional insights.

What is the over-arching truth that God has revealed to you in the passage?

Pray, asking God to show you ways to apply this passage to your life, today.

This is a good study method to try out. Of course, there are many ways to study scripture. You will find the method that works best for you. But this is a good place to start if you need help.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION PROMPTS

As you meet with your Mentor, spend some time getting to know each other. Tell your stories. Share God’s call on your lives. How has He allowed circumstances in each of your lives to help mold you? What obstacles have you overcome to get to where you are today? What victories have you experienced that have inspired you?

As you share your personal calling and passion with your Mentor, trust God to speak through her experience and wisdom. As she gets to know you better, she will likely be able to make observations that will help guide you as you listen to God’s voice in your life.

Write down any questions you would like her to pray over. Share those questions with her when you meet.

Discuss the things you discovered or confirmed about yourself in the Personal Evaluation exercise you completed earlier.

Did your study of the spiritual discipline of Bible study bring up anything you would like to discuss? If so, record that here and share with her when you meet.

PRAYER POINTS

Use this space to record prayer points you would like to share. Also record anything your Mentor asks you to pray for her. Spend a few minutes each day praying for your relationship with your Mentor.

Record prayer needs below.

CHALLENGE

Each session you will be asked to consider the scripture you have been reading and find some key verses that you would like to commit to memory. Let God speak to you. Psalm 119 reminds, *"I will hide His Word in my heart that I might not sin against God."* Let this challenge you to find a scripture each month that you will hide in your heart.

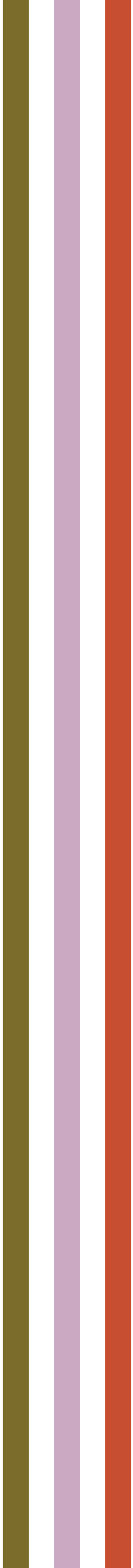
Write out the memory verse you have chosen for this session below. Spend intentional time this month committing it to memory.

God may be speaking to you about what you are to do with what you have learned and experienced through Embrace this session. Take time to record any **action** God has prompted you to take as a result of this session's study.

JUST FOR MENTORS

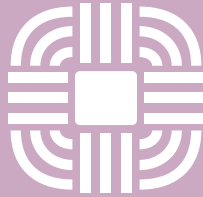
Pray for your Mentee each day. Ask God to give you clarity as you listen to her story and as she asks questions. Ask God to give you wisdom from His Word as you guide and suggest. You may not have answers to all the questions but continue to pray for God to show you how to best lead her as she explores the path He has for your Mentee.

Use questions carefully to help you better understand her passion and her calling. Be quick to listen and slow to respond. As you spend time together, the Lord will provide guidance for you to help her discover the journey God has for her.



**“Now there are
varieties of gifts, but
the same Spirit. And
there are varieties of
ministries, and the same
Lord. There are varieties
of effects, but the same
God who works all
things in all persons.”**

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4–6 (NASB)



Session Two:

INTERSECTION

Notes

Find Your Purpose

Speaker: Spiritual Leader. Someone who’s journey reflects obedience to a spiritual calling.

PERSONAL EVALUATION

Last session we discussed the way God has uniquely crafted you with both traits and experiences that help define your calling. There is an axiom that says at the intersection where your passion and giftedness meet, there you will find your purpose. I think we all long for purpose. When older people who are successful by worldly metrics are pressed, they most always discount those accolades and value purpose and meaning above prosperity and worldly success.

So how do we discover our purpose? How do we uncover the path to living out a fulfilled and meaningful life?

We must begin by identifying the two things that lead us to our purpose.

Passion

Not only does God give us talents and abilities. Not only does He allow circumstances, both good and bad to help mold us. He also creates within each of our hearts a passion. There is that one thing that gets our heart racing or our blood boiling.

What is it that, when you see it or hear about it, motivates you to action? Is it a cause? Is it a people? Is it an injustice? What is it, that, more than anything catapults you into action? If you can identify that one thing, you have just discovered your passion.

Record your thoughts below:

Gifts

As a Christ-follower, an amazing, supernatural experience is yours when you accept the payment for your sins through Christ’s death on the cross. Once you understand that you are unable to pay the sin-debt that you owe, and you need someone to redeem you from your slavery to sin, you look to Christ, who gave His life for yours. At the moment you say yes to His free gift of salvation, you are immediately indwelt with the Holy Spirit. As a part of that supernatural transaction that is a deposit guaranteeing your eternal salvation, you are also given a spiritual gift.

Scripture gives us a few passages where spiritual gifts are discussed. Following are the passages where we learn about why we receive the gifts, what the gifts include, and how those gifts are manifest within the body of Christ.

You may choose to read one, two, or all the passages if you need clarification on spiritual gifts. It is vital that you understand the gifts to completely experience your purpose.

Romans 12:3-8

What are the gifts Paul lists in this passage?

What do you learn about the gifts?

1 Corinthians 12:1-31

What gifts does Paul list in this passage?

Do you learn any additional insights about the gifts and how they are used?

What is the purpose for gifts, according to this passage?

Ephesians 4:1-14

What are the gifts listed in this passage?

Are there additional insights in this passage that speak to the purpose or use of gifts?

Should you need help in identifying your spiritual gifts, there are several different spiritual gift inventories available online. If you need help finding a reliable inventory, go to Lifeway Christian Resources Spiritual Gifts Inventory. This is a PDF that provides a good assessment, instructions on how to score and even a way to graph the results.

As you pray, ask God to confirm your discoveries. Tell Him what you believe your passion to be, and also what you’ve discovered about your spiritual gift. Let Him guide you and speak to you in these areas. Look for ways He is confirming or redirecting as you explore how these things intersect to reveal your purpose.

DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

This session we will cover the spiritual discipline of **Prayer**.

It is important to understand that prayer is a two-way conversation. It is more than just giving God a list of what you need or want. It is a time to grow your relationship with Him. He longs to spend time with you. He wants to build a relationship with you.

Meaningful relationships require time spent together. Talking about life and sharing experiences help build and strengthen those relationships. It is the same way with God. While He knows us intimately and doesn’t need time to get to know us, we require time and conversation spent with Him to get to know Him.

The goal of prayer is to open yourself up to God and allow Him to speak to you. Prayer is more than asking for what we want. Sometimes God may speak words of correction or rebuke. There may be things in our life that He wants us to release. Whether it is a habitual sin, or even a spirit of bitterness we are harboring, He knows we need to let go of those destructive patterns and behaviors.

Sometimes God wants to hear our thanks and praise. He does so much for us. He is worthy of our praise. Think of how much it means to you when someone expresses gratitude to you for something you have done. Everything you have is a gift from God. How often do you take time to thank Him? He is the all-powerful, all-knowing, infinitely-loving God. When is the last time you took the time to praise Him for Who He is?

In the model prayer, what we often call the Lord's Prayer, Jesus gives us an example of how to pray. He includes asking God to provide for our daily needs. He shows us the value of confessing and asking God to forgive our sins.

Actually, this prayer, found in **Matthew 6:9-13**, and the parallel passage in **Luke 11:1-4**, gives us a great model for how to pray. In fact, Jesus gave this response in answer to a question from His disciples.

They certainly saw the power that resulted from Jesus' prayer life. Jesus' disciples didn't ask Him to teach them how to deliver people from demons or heal diseases. The one thing His disciples asked of Him was to teach them how to pray.

If you need help in focusing during your prayer time, try keeping a journal. Write things down. And you can use the model prayer in **Matthew 6** as an outline.

Praise – HALLOWED BE THY NAME

Begin by recognizing Who it is you are conversing with. The Psalms are a great place to start if you have a difficult time with praise. Read the Psalms about God, back to Him. God's Word reminds us that God inhabits the praises of His people. Your praise invites Him in.

Thanksgiving – YOUR KINGDOM COME ON EARTH, AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

Thank God for all He is doing and has done in your life to bring heaven to earth for you. **Matthew 16:19** is a good passage to give you additional insights about what God is doing on earth in your life that connects His heavenly kingdom with the earthly kingdom. But spend time thanking Him for all He has done in your life.

Petition – GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

One of the Old Testament names of God is Jehovah-Jireh, the Lord Will Provide. Abraham gave God that name when God provided the ram to sacrifice in place of his son Isaac (**Genesis 22:1-14**). God provides everything you need. Jesus says He knows your need before you even ask. But God wants us to recognize the source of provision, so He wants us to ask. Even in the **Matthew 6** passage following this model prayer Jesus says, *"ask and it will be given to you, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened for you."* God wants us to ask, even though He already knows our needs.

Forgiveness – FORGIVE US OUR SINS (OR TRESPASSES)

God's greatest gift to us is the forgiveness of our sins through the death of His Son. The blood required to cover our sins could not be complete with the Old Testament animal sacrifice. When Jesus' blood was shed on the cross, He fulfilled God's demand of the blood covering for our sins, once for all time. When Jesus uttered His final words on the cross, He declared "Tetelestai", meaning, It is completed or Paid in full. The perfect tense verb underscores the reality that Jesus' single action on the cross transcended all time both past and future. What He did satisfied God's demand for justice for all time -- past, present, and future.

When we come to God, it is important for us to remember our sin and confess it to Him. He covers our transgressions, but desires that we recognize our need for His covering.

Intercession – AS WE FORGIVE OUR DEBTORS (OR THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US)

While this is not intercession as we typically consider, it is focusing on the actions of others. Jesus emphasized later in this same chapter the importance of our willingness to forgive those who have sinned against us. We must bring those people to God and leave them there. We must turn to Him for the power to forgive.

Intercession in a more typical sense is better understood when we look at Jesus' prayer in **John 17**. Here we hear Him pray for His disciples and then for all believers. We are challenged to pray for others. Throughout the Gospels, we see people who came to Jesus on behalf of others. The man who couldn't walk was lowered through the roof of the home by his friends in order to be placed before Jesus for healing. The centurion went to Jesus to ask for Him to heal the child who was dying. Mary and Martha sent word to Jesus to come as their brother Lazarus was ill to the point of death.

Prayers for others should also be included as we come to God in prayer.

Deliverance – DELIVER US FROM THE EVIL ONE

As Paul reminds us in **Ephesians 6:10-18**, we are on a battleground, not a playground. The Christian life is serious business, and we face an unseen enemy who longs to destroy us. It is in our diligence to pray against the enemy that we are victorious in this battle against evil. Paul reminds us that there are powers and principalities at war in places we cannot see. We can often be used as pawns in that battle if we are not aware and armed.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Share with your Mentor what you have discovered about your passion. What is the fire God has placed in you? Tell her about the thoughts you've had during this session about how God wants to use your passion and experiences to help you define your purpose.

Tell her about your spiritual gift. She will be praying with you about confirmation of your gift as you commit to use it. It is often through others that we are most affirmed in our gifting. Remember that spiritual gifts are not natural talents and skills. They are supernaturally imbued gifts given to you by God. And He often uses them in supernatural ways.

Write down any questions you have as a result of this sessions' personal study.

How can your Mentor best pray for you on your journey to become more committed to your own prayer life? Ask her if there are ways you can pray for her. Record those things below. Take the Prayer Points section below seriously.

PRAYER POINTS

Use this space to record prayer points you would like to share. Also record anything your Mentor asks you to pray for her. Spend a few minutes each day praying for your relationship with your Mentor.

Record prayer needs below.

CHALLENGE

Each session you will be asked to consider the scripture you have been reading and find some key verses that you would like to commit to memory. Let God speak to you. **Psalm 119** reminds, *"I will hide His Word in my heart that I might not sin against God."* Let this challenge you to find a scripture each month that you will hide in your heart.

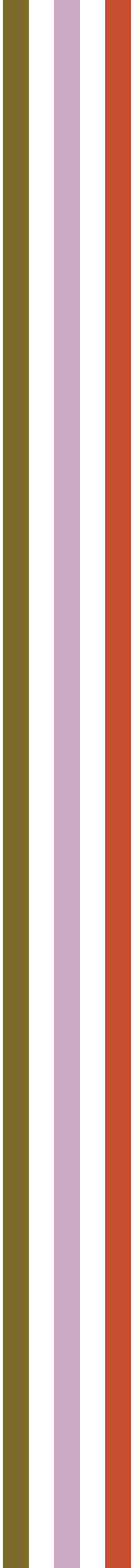
Write out the memory verse you have chosen for this session below. Spend intentional time this month committing it to memory.

God may be speaking to you about what you are to do with what you have learned and experienced through Embrace this session. Take time to record any **action** God has prompted you to take as a result of this session's study.

JUST FOR MENTORS

This session focused on the spiritual discipline of prayer. Be particularly intentional this week about praying for your Mentee. Record anything you believe God is speaking to you about her. Keep a journal of things you've asked and how God has answered.

She is exploring her purpose this session. Ask God to clearly define her passion and reveal or confirm the spiritual gift God has given her. Spend any necessary time you need to research spiritual gifts so you are prepared to answer any questions she may have. The material provided in this session will give you the scriptures to study for additional insight.



**“For all of you who
were baptized into
Christ have clothed
yourselves with Christ.
There is neither Jew nor
Greek, there is neither
slave nor free, there is
neither male nor female;
for you are all one in
Christ Jesus.”**

GALATIANS 3:27-28 (NASB)



Session Three:

IDENTITY

Notes

Embrace Your Ministry Calling

Speaker: A woman in ministry who has come to understand her calling through her own journey of discovery dealing with traditional ministry roles. Perhaps a female staff member (minister) at a local church.

PERSONAL EVALUATION

You have spent the past two sessions reflecting on who you are, your passions and your spiritual gifts. Now, you are challenged to consider your identity amid the calling. As a woman, you may be struggling with who and how God is calling you to minister with respect to restrictions you might feel based on your interpretation of scripture, or of traditional roles you have seen lived out in your church. It is important for you to search out God's calling for you based on His Word, and not tradition.

As Baptists, we have struggled with the issue of women in ministry for decades. Perhaps even centuries. Spending time in God's Word, searching out some of the women God has used in scripture might help you clarify for yourself God's particular call on your life.

The following questions may be things you are struggling with:

- **Should I be ordained as a minister, and why or why not?**
- **Does the vocation or calling I'm considering require me to stand in authority over men?**
- **How does the Bible inform the position of women and men in the church?**

You might consider some of the following women in the Bible and spend some time studying their journey and how God used them in His plan for humanity.

Old Testament

Deborah: Judges 4

What position was Deborah given according to scripture?

What was her role in this passage?

How did God use her?

Huldah: 2 Kings 22

What title was given to Huldah in this passage?

What did she do for the King and his officers?

How was her role used by God?

New Testament

Lydia: Acts 16:11-15

List everything you learn about Lydia in this passage.

How did God use her?

Priscilla: Acts 18:18-26; 1 Cor. 16:19

How does Paul describe her?

What was her role, along with her husband, in Paul's ministry?

Women in the church in Rome: Romans 16:1-16

What do you learn about the following women in this passage?

Phoebe:

Priscilla:

Mary:

Tryphena & Tryphosa:

Persis:

Rufus' mother:

Phillip's four daughters: Acts 21:9

What did these four girls do?

In order to have a complete picture of women in scripture, we must also consider some scriptures that seem to restrict women's roles in the church.

Read 1 Timothy 2:8-15

What does Paul say about women in the church?

What is the focus of the woman’s outer adornment?

There needs to be a clarification, depending on the translation you read. The word “woman” in **1 Timothy 2:11-12**, is more appropriately translated as “wife.” In other words, wives are to follow the direction Paul gives in Ephesians. Paul encourages a wife to choose to come under (submit to) the authority of her husband and exhibit a gentle, quiet spirit. Scripture does not teach that women are submissive to men. The Bible teaches the specific role of wife and husband.

When we consider that the women referenced in **1 Corinthians 14:34-35** are to be silent in church and ask their theological questions at home of their husbands, some take this to mean that women are not to have a visible role in worship. However, theologians differ on the universal nature of this teaching. Some consider this specific to the particular context, rather than teaching a universal truth. And in context, these verses are actually speaking about orderly worship rather than the issue of women speaking in church.

Now that you have some background in the scripture, consider how God may be calling you. Spend some time in prayer and ask God to give you a truly teachable spirit. Ask Him to correct any wrong thinking you may have developed. Journal any of your thoughts or questions below.

DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

The spiritual discipline of **Serving** is one thing that sets believers apart. We are called to serve others both inside and outside the body of Christ.

Read Hebrews 13:1-3, 16

What does this passage instruct us to do?

What is our attitude to be?

Read Matthew 25:34-40

What does Jesus say about our service to others?

Who is the true recipient of our kindness?

As you consider ways to serve, remember that we don't serve out of obligation but out of compassion. Listen to the Holy Spirit when you see a need. Always be available to be the vessel of His love and mercy.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Perhaps the personal reflection time this week has brought up questions regarding to whom and how you are to minister. Record any questions you have below.

Listen to any experience your Mentor has had in ministry. Who is the primary recipient(s) of her ministry? Has she had to wrestle with her understanding of a personal calling regarding women in ministry?

Be honest with your Mentor about any questions, fears, or misunderstandings you have had related to women’s roles in ministry.

PRAYER POINTS

Be specific as you share with your Mentor as to how to best pray for you. Ask her to pray that God would provide direction, wisdom and insight as you consider His calling.

Record prayer needs below.

CHALLENGE

Each session you will be asked to consider the scripture you have been reading and find some key verses that you would like to commit to memory. Let God speak to you. Psalm 119 reminds, *“I will hide His Word in my heart that I might not sin against God.”* Let this challenge you to find a scripture each month that you will hide in your heart.

Write out the memory verse you have chosen for this session below. Spend intentional time this month committing it to memory.

God may be speaking to you about what you are to do with what you have learned and experienced through Embrace this session. Take time to record any **action** God has prompted you to take as a result of this session's study.

JUST FOR MENTORS

This session may have brought up some questions and conflicts in the mind and heart of your Mentee. Be particularly sensitive as she wrestles with her understanding of where God may be calling her to minister.

Ask if your Mentee had any questions about her study on women in ministry. Be sensitive as you help your Mentee process the questions. These are not easy, straightforward questions with yes and no answers. Help encourage her as she processes and wrestles with these important issues.

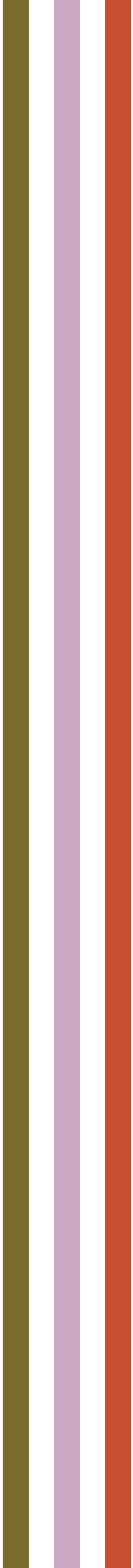
Help her with understanding and any insights you may have gleaned over your years of ministry. Be careful that you simply guide with wisdom rather than answer definitively. She has trusted you with guiding her along the path of her calling. Remember to be a good steward of her trust.

Spend some extra time in prayer before you meet. Ask God to give you wisdom as you share, guide and provide counsel for her.

You will want to spend time studying some of the women in the Bible listed in this session. Be especially careful that your insights are based on your study of the Word rather than traditional beliefs you may have adopted so that truth informs your advice.

You may want to enlist help from a pastor or other spiritual leader to help you as you guide your Mentee on this journey. Make notes below.

The spiritual discipline this session is serving. Help guide her as she looks for ways and places to serve. This might be a good opportunity for the two of you to serve together. A great way to learn is by doing. Allow God to grow your relationship as you share with those in need.



**“In the same way,
let your light shine
before others, so that
they may see your good
works and give glory
to your Father who
is in heaven.”**

MATTHEW 5:16 (ESV)



Session Four:

INFLUENCE

Notes

Explore Your Ministry Context

Speaker: A missionary or minister who can give insight into discovering the people group where they are called to minister.

PERSONAL EVALUATION

God has purposefully placed you in a specific context. Whether it is your vocational circle, circle of friendships, family sphere or faith community, God has planted you in a place. It is important to view your place, whether geographic, relational, or vocational as an intentional direction from God.

Sometimes people aren't exactly sure how they ended up where they did. Perhaps relationships brought them to a place. Maybe it was the only job offer they received that led them to a new locale. But wherever you are, begin there. God may be calling you elsewhere at another time. But for now, you are where you are, and He can use you in your current context.

When believers are struggling with a call to ministry, they often ask the question, "who are the people God is calling me to minister to?" Sometimes these are identified as people-groups. Those who are seeking to serve on the mission field will often try to identify the group to whom they feel called and perhaps especially equipped to serve.

But starting where you are will help you understand where God might be taking you.

Throughout scripture we find God using specific people in specific places. Paul was Jewish, and certainly in his early life was a fully committed Jewish leader, to the point of trying to eradicate this new sect that followed Jesus. But after His supernatural encounter with the risen Lord on the road to Damascus, this self-proclaimed "Jew of the Jews," became the mouthpiece God used to reach Gentiles who needed to hear the Gospel.

As you consider where God desires to use you, it is often helpful to look to your past and your experiences. It is also important to realize that people groups aren't necessarily defined by ethnicity. Often the very best counselors for drug addicts are those who themselves have struggled with and overcome their addiction. The best therapists for children of divorce are many times those adults who have experienced their own family of origin issues related to the divorce of their parents.

Those who have lost children or spouses are often the best encouragers for others who are walking the same path. Maybe you have come through a faith struggle that has led you down a path that actively explored other religions and you have a particular insight into how to share the Gospel with those who are following other gods.

It might be a particular ethnic group where God has placed a special compassion and desire to serve. But it also might be a situational people

group where your experiences have uniquely equipped you to serve.

Throughout scripture, we see examples of God clearly leading people into situations and places where He has a plan for them to minister. We will consider one such instance.

Read Acts 10:9-27

What happened to Peter in his vision?

How did God use his vision to direct him to a group of lost people?

You might want to read **Acts 10** in its entirety to get the full picture.

Peter, a Jewish believer, was forbidden from mingling with Gentiles through the Jewish law. However, God came to him in a vision, directing him to a group of Gentiles who needed to hear the Good News of the Gospel. Despite Peter’s prejudice, he walked obediently, and God used him to open the door for the salvation of the Gentiles.

While this passage teaches several truths, we clearly see that God had a plan. He chose a person (Peter) to go to a people (Cornelius’ home filled with Gentiles) to share the Gospel.

There are many more examples in the both the Old and New Testaments where God called individuals to minister to a specific group of people.

As you consider who He is calling you to share with, consider that He may be calling you outside your comfort zone. He certainly may be calling you to minister in a group where you are uniquely equipped, but He may also be calling you to step beyond your limits and allow Him to use you in divine and miraculous ways.

The focus of this session is on the group you are called to minister to. However, God may be equipping you through the relationships you have already developed. Ask yourself the following.

- **What kind of personal relationships do you have in your life to help encourage the accomplishment of your goals?**
- **Are there people God is calling you to build a relationship with?**

- **Are there relationships in your life that are standing in the way of your accomplishing your goal?**
- **Who is in your circle?**

Record any insights below.

Within these relationships, you might consider these questions as well:

- **How are you growing your relationship with God?**
- **What community or fellowship are you investing in and how are they investing in you?**
- **What is your current personal relationship status? Dating? Marriage?**

Record your insights below.

It is important to consider your current relationships and how they are influencing you. It is also important to understand the influence you have on others in your circle. If you are dating or married, there is another level of relationship that seriously affects the decisions you make regarding ministry. While friendships can help you process where you belong, serious dating relationships or marriage play a key role in your determination of ministry focus.

If you are married, you and your spouse must pray together, discuss, and determine together where God is calling you to serve. Your marriage is the priority earthly relationship in your life. God will call you to serve together. So, determining that place of service is decided as a couple or family.

DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

The discipline we discuss in this session is **Spiritual Friendship**. Throughout scripture, we see God using relationships to build up, encourage, rebuke, and equip believers on their ministry journey.

Read 2 Timothy 1:1-11

Who is writing the letter?

Who is receiving the letter?

Describe the relationship of these two based on what you read in this portion of the letter:

You see a very close relationship between Paul and Timothy. If you read much commentary on these two men, you see that Paul considers Timothy to be his son in the faith. You don't have to read very far, in the New Testament especially, before you find the great value God places on human relationships.

We need spiritual friendships. We need others in the faith who will challenge us and encourage us. We need those we can trust with our struggles and our triumphs.

God created us to be in relationships. Even in the very beginning, God created us for community. If you begin to read in **Genesis 1** and **2**, you see that for everything God created, He said it was good. When He created man, He said that was VERY good. Then, in **Genesis 2:18**, we see the very first time God said something was not good.

He wasn't talking about sin, because man still lived in the perfection of the Garden and was without sin. **Genesis 2:18** tells us that God said that it is NOT good for man to be alone. That's when He created woman to be man's companion.

We cannot live a healthy spiritual existence in isolation. God has given us relationships to help us grow and develop in the faith. If you don't have a friendship that helps you grow in your faith, that's your new challenge for this session!

A Message for the Married

Your spouse is the primary person of influence in your life. However, your spouse cannot be your only person of influence. As a woman, you need other women in your life. Look for women who can speak truth and encouragement into your journey. However, you must guard your marriage with diligence. A spiritual friendship will never be a place to tear down or verbally disparage your spouse. And as a married woman, your spiritual friendship should never be with another man. You and your spouse can certainly have friendships with other couples, but you must never put yourself in the position to be in a singular spiritual friendship with another man.

Billy Graham made a promise to himself and his staff when his ministry took him away from his wife and family for weeks and months at a time. He vowed to never share a meal alone with another woman, and never travel in a car alone with another woman. Words of wisdom that still ring true many decades later.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Your discussion this session is two-fold.

Who is the person or people who influence you? Who are the people in your circle who help shape you and your faith journey?

Secondly, is there a group you feel especially called to serve?

Discuss both issues.

Discuss the experiences you have had throughout your life. Do you have a desire to minister to people who have had similar experiences?

This doesn't necessarily just mean culturally. Perhaps you have desire to work with children or teens. Maybe working with and ministering to women is where your heart is leaning.

Is there a people group or culture where you feel particularly drawn?

Consider where God has placed you today. What opportunities for ministry do you have in your job, neighborhood, or sphere of influence?

Record any insights below.

PRAYER POINTS

As you discuss the various leanings with your Mentor, spend time during the coming weeks praying that God will either confirm or redirect you as you seek your area of influence. Ask her to pray for the people group you feel particularly drawn toward. Consider all aspects of a people group. It is not just culture that defines a people group.

Record any prayer needs below.

CHALLENGE

Each session you will be asked to consider the scripture you have been reading and find some key verses that you would like to commit to memory. Let God speak to you. Psalm 119 reminds, *"I will hide His Word in my heart that I might not sin against God."* Let this challenge you to find a scripture each month that you will hide in your heart.

Write out the memory verse you have chosen for this session below. Spend intentional time this month committing it to memory.

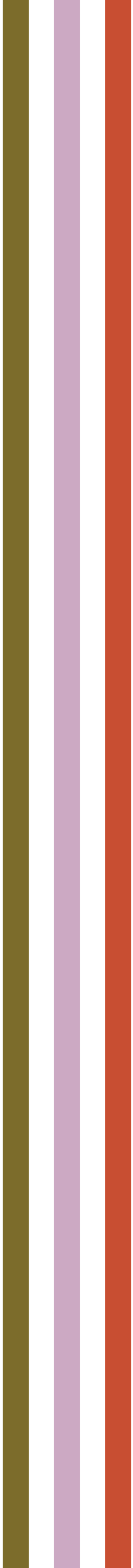
God may be speaking to you about what you are to do with what you have learned and experienced through Embrace this session. Take time to record any **action** God has prompted you to take as a result of this session's study.

JUST FOR MENTORS

Be prepared to discuss a variety of options with your Mentee. Help her process experiences and thoughts as she considers where God may be calling her to minister.

You have been together for several weeks at this point. What observations can you make regarding those she seems to be best equipped or most passionate about helping? Do you see her particularly drawn to children or youth? Would she do well in another cultural context? Has she overcome a situation or circumstance in her life where she is uniquely equipped to help others who have similar experiences?

Record your insights below.



**“But seek first his
kingdom and his
righteousness, and all
these things will be
given to you as well.”**

MATTHEW 6:33 (NIV)



Session Five:

PRIORITY

Notes

Prioritize Your Resources

Speaker: Someone experienced in the field of time management and/or financial management. Consider a Christian Financial Advisor in your church for the financial piece. Perhaps consider dividing the time between two speakers or even creating two separate sessions.

PERSONAL EVALUATION

We have spent the last several weeks challenging you to look at yourself as an individual. What are your gifts, experiences, talents, and passion? This session we are considering the two things that are common to all of us. Time and financial resources.

While we don't all have the same financial portfolio, we do all share the exact same number of minutes in a day. No one can gain more or use less time. Time is fixed and we all have the same amount.

The difference lies in what we do with the time we have. Sometimes we can consider time in two different ways. Much like money, we have two choices. We can spend it. Or we can invest it.

And, as stated above, our financial resources differ, but we all have the same choices in what we do with the resources. Just like with time. We can either spend our financial resources, or we can invest them.

Here are some questions to consider.

- **Do you have a plan for personal growth?**
- **What is it?**
- **How can you prioritize your plan with respect to your time and your resources?**

Certainly, we all would agree that spending time developing spiritually will guide and inform your decisions in every other area of life. Your spiritual growth is at the core of your success in any endeavor. So, here are some questions for you to consider.

- **What are you doing today that is deepening your walk with the Lord?**
- **Are you spending your time and money on earthly pursuits, or do you prioritize your time and resources investing them in God's Kingdom agenda?**
- **How do you prioritize your time with the Lord ... or do you?**
- **How do you structure your time with Him?**

- **What are you doing every day to grow in your relationship with Christ?**
- **How are you managing your time to be available to Him to serve?**
- **Where do you need the most help? Scripture study, prayer, journaling?**

Record your reflections.

Read Matthew 6:19–34.

Reflect on the passage, and record what you think Jesus is teaching. Write down any questions you would like to discuss with your Mentor.

Many times, the two things we have the toughest time prioritizing are our money and our time. We feel insecure financially so we try to hold onto as much as we can. Or the opposite, we want everything we see and want to fulfill the fleshly desire to have it all. So, we spend with abandon with no thought of responsibility.

Same thing with our time. Especially when we are young, we think that time has no end. We think we have enough to spend doing what we please and fulfilling our desire for pleasure.

We must be so careful with both. God has given us the gift of time. He wants us to enjoy our life. But He also wants us to be aware of what we do with time and money. He has given us very specific guidelines regarding our finances, and He expects that we follow those.

With our time, He longs for us to invest in others. He wants us to give Him a portion of our time. While the Bible teaches that God wants us to begin our financial giving to Him with a tenth of our income, I wonder if that might be a good starting place for our time. How would your life change if you made the same commitment to tithe ten percent of your time by investing it in Him, just as you do your money?

If you consider that you are awake about 16 hours a day, would your life be different if you tithed a tenth (1.6 hours/day) to Him? Prayer, Bible study, investing in someone else by serving them in His Name? What would your life be like if you laid up the treasure of time in heaven?

Not in a legalistic way, but with a cheerful heart, consider giving God a little bit more of your time every day and see what He does with it.

"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you." **Matthew 6:33.**

DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

As you might guess, we are looking at the spiritual discipline of **Stewardship** today. Yes, stewardship means money. But it also includes all the resources God has given us. Including how we invest the time and talents God has given us -- what we do with the relationships and people God has placed in our care.

One word of clarification. While we are tasked with stewarding all the things God gives us, those things are not meant to replace what God has asked us to give regarding our financial resources.

Financial Stewardship

Look at the following scriptures and record what you learn about financial stewardship.

Matthew 6:21

A key takeaway from this passage is that your heart follows your treasure. What means the most to you will consume your heart. Decisions sometimes precede desire. Making intentional decisions for what you know is the best way will instruct your heart in what to value.

Malachi 3:10

In this passage, the tithe can be defined as a tenth. However, it is important to note that this is often the beginning point from which giving is borne.

No need to be legalistic but remember that the source of the financial provision you have comes from God. Malachi challenges us to trust God for provision by returning to Him only a portion of what He so generously provides.

Hebrews 13:5

Key point in this passage is that you don't find contentment in what you acquire. Contentment comes from your relationship with the Lord. When you are a child in a healthy home, you are content because you trust your parents to care for you and provide what you need. You are free to play and enjoy being a child because you know that your parents, who love you, are taking care of all the things that you need, and even want. God challenges us to trust Him as the perfect parent. One who gives us freedom to live as He has called us to live, while He handles the provision for all our needs and sometimes, even our wants!

Matthew 6:24

We cannot travel two roads at the same time. We must choose the path to follow. Choosing to pursue God assures that we have everything we need.

Stewardship of Time and Talents

Financial stewardship is often the most difficult to manage. However, there are other things God gives us to manage as well. Likely, you have heard the admonition to be a good steward of time, talents and treasures. Since we have covered the treasures piece, let's discover what God's Word says about stewardship of time and talents.

Consider the following passages and note your observations.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

1 Peter 4:10

Colossians 3:23

God asks that we trust Him. He doesn't give us time, talents and treasures to spend on our own desires. He asks that we invest what we have with Him. Spend some time reflecting on how you're doing with the things God has given you. Are you pursuing the things of this world, or are you seeking God's Kingdom first and foremost?

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION PROMPTS

This session may have been challenging. Since we all seem to feel so pressed with time and stressed by finances, it is sometimes difficult to let go and trust God with these things. Spend some time discussing how to better manage time. The speaker this week likely provided some good suggestions. Perhaps you can discuss how to implement some of the time management strategies.

You might discuss the greatest obstacle for personal time management. Come prepared to share any suggestions or strategies you may have learned in your own experience that has been helpful.

Money is also a difficult topic to discuss. Are there some unhealthy financial habits where you can implement some suggestions for improvement? Churches sometimes offer financial seminars for those seeking help with financial stewardship based on Godly principles.

Record insights below.

PRAYER POINTS

Pray for intentional use of time. Ask that God reveal any areas where patterns for how time is spent can be improved. Perhaps the perspective of spending time versus investing time could be a clarifying principle.

Pray for finances. What are some ways to better steward the financial resources God has provided? Sometimes we think we need to spend more time earning more money, when God is simply asking that we do a better job managing the money we already have.

Record prayer concerns below.

CHALLENGE

Each session you will be asked to consider the scripture you have been reading and find some key verses that you would like to commit to memory. Let God speak to you. Psalm 119 reminds, *"I will hide His Word in my heart that I might not sin against God."* Let this challenge you to find a scripture each month that you will hide in your heart.

Write out the memory verse you have chosen for this session below. Spend intentional time this month committing it to memory.

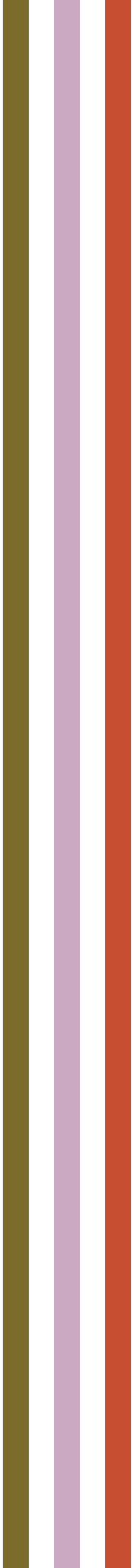
God may be speaking to you about what you are to do with what you have learned and experienced through Embrace this session. Take time to record any **action** God has prompted you to take as a result of this session's study.

JUST FOR MENTORS

This session may be difficult for your Mentee. Being transparent about finances is something we often struggle with. Try to be sensitive to her privacy, while also helping her understand the importance of giving as a way of life.

If your Mentee has not yet adopted the discipline of financially giving back to God, help encourage her. Perhaps she can't begin with the full tithe but help her start somewhere. Also, help her set a goal and plan a strategy to reach that goal. Keep it practical. You might be able to help her with a budget. Maybe step one is to simply have a plan to track where her money is being spent. Then, you might help her find places to cut back in order to begin to work toward financial stewardship.

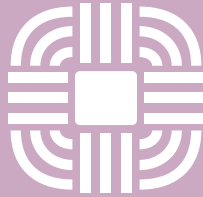
Stewardship isn't just what you give in a tithe or offering. It is responsibly and intentionally managing all the financial resources God has given you.



**“Therefore, since
we are surrounded
by such a great cloud
of witnesses, let us
throw off everything
that hinders and the sin
that so easily entangles.**

**And let us run with
perseverance the race
marked out for us, fixing
our eyes on Jesus, the
pioneer and perfecter
of faith. For the joy set
before him he endured
the cross, scorning its
shame, and sat down at
the right hand of the
throne of God.”**

HEBREWS 12:1-2 (NIV)



Session Six:

CHOICES

Wise Decision-Making

Speaker: Christian Licensed Professional Counselor with experience in career counseling and life skills management.

PERSONAL EVALUATION

Decisions, decisions. What do I need to take with me today when I leave the house? Which shoes should I wear? Should I take an umbrella today? What college should I attend? Should I marry this person? What career path should I choose? Is this the job I should take?

Are you exhausted yet?

Sometimes we may not realize how many decisions we make day-to-day. Some of them have very minimal consequences. What shoes I choose to wear today might make a difference in how tired my feet get throughout the day but would hardly have an impact on the future of my life. Leaving home having chosen to also leave your umbrella, might mean a brisk run to your car and damp clothes when the rain comes, but would likely not be a life-and-death consequence.

But other decisions have life-altering consequences. Just ask someone who has married someone who turned out to be a mistake. Making a career decision can mean the difference between a life of satisfaction in a vocation that fulfills our purpose or a lifetime of feeling stuck in a job we can't stand. Sometimes attending the right university can open doors for us in our chosen field. Other times, experience is the best preparation for the job we are best suited for.

Free will is a pillar of our Christian faith. God never coerces, He simply calls. He never pushes, He only pursues. We are free to choose to follow Him. Or not.

But sometimes free will can be a double-edged sword. How many times have you wanted to do what God wants you to do, only to be conflicted about what that is? Wouldn't it be nice to open your inbox and find an email from God telling you which job to choose? Sometimes we may just want God to take away our free will and make us do the right thing.

Of course, the choice is clear if we are considering walking contrary to His Word or His Ways. But most decisions we make are a question of good versus best. Many of our decisions come down to which job to take or which school to attend, which major or what classes. Which city should I choose to look for employment?

Effective decision making is important as you begin to pursue the path God has laid out for your life. Be encouraged. God has a plan for your life. Seek Him and He will show you the way He has marked out for you. Trust Him in the journey and listen for Him to show you each step of the way.

*"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance **the race marked out for us**, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith."*
Hebrews 12:1-2 (emphasis mine).

As we close out our experience together. I want to take you to a scripture that is likely familiar to you. As you consider making decisions, I hope you are seeking God's will. What does scripture have to say about discerning the will of God?

Read the following passages and record everything you learn about discerning God's will.

Ephesians 5:15-20

How does Paul encourage us to live?

What are some things that might interfere with our understanding of God's will?

What are some indications in our own life that we are filled with God's Holy Spirit?

Luke 9:23

What does Luke tell us to do each day?

What do we become if we follow his advice?

Romans 12:1-2

What does Paul contrast regarding discerning the will of God?

Spend some time in prayer reflecting on what you’ve learned from these passages about determining God’s will. Perhaps you have other scriptures God has brought to mind for you to read as well.

Record your insights below.

DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES

The discipline we are focusing on for this session is Spiritual **Solitude**. In our culture of constant stimulation, it is often very difficult to get quiet with God. Social media, constant connection through the phones that even live on our wrists these days and being always available to others can make it difficult to hear from the Lord.

Your challenge for this session is to focus on solitude.

Read Matthew 14:19-23

Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people. They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers. About 5,000 men were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children!

Immediately after this, Jesus insisted that his disciples get back into the boat and cross to the other side of the lake, while he sent the people home. After sending them home, he went up into the hills by himself to pray. Night fell while he was there alone.

After a very busy day, Jesus’ primary goal was to be alone with His Father.

Read Mark 1:21-31

After Jesus left the synagogue with James and John, they went to Simon and Andrew’s home. Now Simon’s mother-in-law was sick in bed with a high fever. They told Jesus about her right away. So, He went to her bedside, took her by the hand, and helped her sit up. Then the fever left her, and she prepared a meal for them. That evening after sunset, many sick and demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. The whole town gathered at the door to watch. So, Jesus healed many people who were sick with various diseases, and He cast out many demons. But because the demons knew who He was, He did not allow them to speak.

Before daybreak the next morning, Jesus got up and went out to an isolated place to pray. Later Simon and the others went out to find Him. When they found Him, they said, “Everyone is looking for You.”

But Jesus replied, “We must go on to other towns as well, and I will preach to them, too. That is why I came.” So, He traveled throughout the region of Galilee, preaching in the synagogues and casting out demons.

Even amid busy, busy days of ministry, Jesus recognized His need for solitude and did whatever He could to intentionally spend time alone with God.

For further study read: **Luke 4:42; Luke 5:16; Mark 6:46-48**

Jesus gave us many examples of the need for spending time alone with God. Solitude. No people. No distractions. For us, today, that means no technology. Challenge yourself to spend time with a Bible that is not on your phone. I know the convenience of a Bible app. While the convenience is wonderful, there are times when you genuinely need to unplug. Open a Bible, putting your phone aside. No text messages or notifications to distract you from time with the Father.

Listen to Him, and record what He is telling you.

ONE-ON-ONE DISCUSSION PROMPTS

Discuss your current life circumstance. Use these questions as conversation starters.

- **What is your current career path?**
- **How is God using it to give you a ministry platform?**
- **How are you managing your financial resources for ministry?**
- **What criteria do you use in making life decisions?**

This is a good starting point. Discuss strategies that might help you develop in the area of decision making. Consider some lessons you have learned as you have made decisions in the past. What are some good decisions you have made, and what was the process you used in making those decisions?

Are there any lessons you have learned from past decisions that were not the best choice?

Record any personal discussion points below.

PRAYER POINTS

Pray, asking God to teach and direct as you make decisions. Look for ways God may be speaking to you to direct you as you seek Him.

Pray **Matthew 6:33** and make it personal. "God, I long to seek Your Kingdom and Your righteousness first as I make decisions. Help me to trust You and watch as you add all these things to me."

The Experiencing God² study outlines some practical ways to watch for God to speak to you. The list includes prayer, Bible study, other believers and circumstances. When trying to seek God for specific direction, pray that you are sensitive to ways God might be speaking to you through these avenues. Look for times when you see other believers or circumstances confirming what God has revealed in His Word and through your prayer time with Him.

² Blackaby, Henry T., King, Claude V. Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God. Lifeway Christian Resources, 2007.

Record prayer points below.

CHALLENGE

Each session you will be asked to consider the scripture you have been reading and find some key verses that you would like to commit to memory. Let God speak to you. **Psalm 119** reminds, *"I will hide His Word in my heart that I might not sin against God."* Let this challenge you to find a scripture each month that you will hide in your heart.

Write out the memory verse you have chosen for this session below. Spend intentional time this month committing it to memory.

God may be speaking to you about what you are to do with what you have learned and experienced through Embrace this session. Take time to record any **action** God has prompted you to take as a result of this session's study.

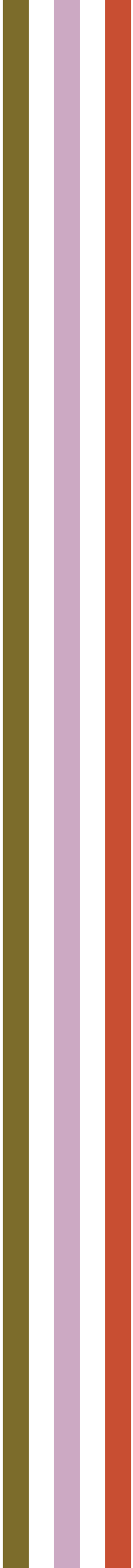
JUST FOR MENTORS

You may have life experiences to share about times when you made wise decisions and also when you missed where God was leading. These experiences can be very valuable tools to help your Mentee as she seeks to make Godly decisions about her life and future.

Being transparent and sharing lessons learned through mistakes is often very powerful. Be willing to share openly and honestly with the goal of helping teach and train from your own experience.

Encourage your Mentee as she seeks to discover the path God has laid out for her. Remember that we don't make our own path, but we seek to uncover the path God has already planned for us. Some days the path will be clear. Other times there will be obstacles ... things covering the path that need to be moved in order to see our next step. Sometimes the sun is cloud-covered, and we can't see clearly where to step, but we must trust the little vision that we do have.

Remember that you are there to guide, encourage and help her learn how to discover her own way. Providing guidance rather than answers will help your Mentee grow as she discovers how to hear from the Lord and walk in His way.



“Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill His good purpose. ”

PHILIPPIANS 2:12–13 (NIV)



Session Seven:

CELEBRATION

Notes

Let this session be a time of celebration of the growth experienced through the journey of Mentoring. You might want to have a time together with formal presentations and a time for reflection. Let this experience be the capstone of the mentoring journey you have all shared.

Looking back over the previous sessions and evaluating the growth experienced sends a powerful message applauding the value of relationships.

Certainly, pray over the Mentees as they begin the journey they have discovered through the mentoring experience. Encourage them to consider becoming mentors themselves and sharing what they have learned on their journey.

Possible Next Steps

As your group has walked through these six sessions together, they have likely developed closer relationships with each other, and have certainly all gained insights into God's will and purpose for them and their calling to ministry.

This may be a time when you discuss ways the group can remain together and pursue ministry together. Pray over the group and encourage them to explore ways God may be leading them to live out what they have learned.

Perhaps there are ministries through a local church or faith-based ministry where they could begin to serve. There may also be community services where they could connect and serve.

Two aspects of the next steps are important.

Discipleship.

What you began through Embrace needs to continue as these young women serve. Continuing in the Word, prayer and fellowship is important as they continue their journey to follow the Lord.

Sharing the Gospel.

Service is important to the younger generations. They long to make a difference in the lives of others. And this is something Jesus did as well. However, it is important to keep the purpose of service at the forefront. Jesus met the physical needs of others in order to reveal Himself to them. No matter the temporal need and how important it is that we seek to meet that need, the most important need in anyone's life, is their need for a Savior.

Our opportunity to serve and minister is always a bridge to share Christ. Social justice is not the end. It is the means, the avenue, to the real purpose for serving. That purpose is to share the Good News of Christ with a lost and dying world.

While Mentors may no longer be involved on a regular basis with the young women you have served, keep them in your prayers as they continue their journey of growth and Kingdom-service.

WMU of Texas would love to celebrate your Embrace cohort. Please be sure you fill out the information on our website, letting us know about your group, and any reflections you have about your experience through Embrace.

Also consider posting updates on our WMU of Texas facebook community page. Be sure to use **#embrace** when posting.

