

Precious to God

Leader Material for a 5-Session Seminar for Women on Their Worth to Their Creator
In simple English for translation

Theme verses: Psalm 139:16-17, Psalm 29:11

SESSION OUTLINE



Introduction

True Story - Precious Pot
Craft—Decorate Pot (illustrates being careful with what is precious)
Game—Name Toss (get to know each other)



You are Precious – Study of Psalm 139

Craft—Encouragement Cards
Game— Waterpot Relay (treat fragile things with care)
Bible Story—Ruth Part 1
Drama—Ruth Part 1



Your Relationships are Precious I – With God, With Family

Craft—Decorate Pot (illustrates uniqueness of each woman God created)
Game—Team Waterpot Relay (teamwork in family and the family of God)
Bible story—Ruth Part 2
Drama—Ruth Part 2



Your Relationships are Precious II – With Friends, With the Lost

Craft—Finish Pots (keep as reminder that God cares)
Game—Gossip (words can hurt)
Bible story—Ruth Part 3
Drama—Ruth Part 3



Conclusion – Be Beautiful Inside and Out

Craft—Sign Cards
Game—Draw Self on Head (can't see, like life, need help)
Bible story—Esther
Drama—Group Choice

PREPARATION

Teacher Notes and Extra Ideas

Women have great worth to their Creator. He made them with purpose and an important role to fill in His plan.

This 5-day or 5-session seminar teaches women God's love and value for them. The introduction is a shorter session to begin the seminar to give room for arrivals, and for you the leader to get to know the women and them get to know each other.

Sessions 2-5 all include:

- A time of Bible teaching
- A Craft
- A Game
- A Bible story
- A Bible drama

This curriculum is for you and your unique ministry. It was originally created as a camp series for women in a remote village setting who are believers but have little Bible knowledge. Change it however you would like to fit your culture, audience, materials, and time available. Add songs and times of praise and anything else that fits your time and the spiritual needs of the women attending. You may use or not use anything in this curriculum - it is for you to adapt as you'd like.

We hope this tool will help you as you help women know their worth to God and how to live His way.

Extra Ideas:

- Start Bible study with a song of praise!
- End every session with prayer.
- Ideas for memorizing verses together:
 - Add motions
 - Turn the verse into a song
 - Have group competitions - creating the best verse presentation (acting, singing, etc.)
- Include historical/cultural information about Bible times that make the Bible story come alive.
- Have group discussions to talk over what they learned in Bible study and pray for each other.
- Make sure each woman has or is given a Bible.
- Get a group photo and give a copy to each woman.
- Have them choose the name of another woman to continue praying for after they leave.
- Make sure women have your contact information for as they continue to grow, or if they are struggling.
- Get their information for future ministry, such as sending SLM Bible courses.

SESSION 1

Introduction –Precious Pot

One day a long time ago, a woman went to a potter's village. She watched the potter put the clay on the wheel. As the wheel spun, he carefully put his hands into the clay and molded a beautiful little pot. Then he picked up the new, wet pot and set it out under the sun to dry.

As the lady watched the potter, the children of the village came to see the stranger who had come to visit their village. They all stood around her and looked at her. When she walked, they followed her. She smiled at them and asked them what their names were. The children talked to the lady while they all watched the potter make more pots.

The woman was leaving this country soon. She did not know if she would ever come back. She wanted to take something special with her when she went away. Something that would make her remember this place forever.



The lady had an idea. She asked the potter to make her a special pot. Then she asked the children to come close to her. She told them she wanted a very special pot to take home with her. She asked them if they would carve their names into a wet pot for her. The children liked the idea. When the clay of the pot was still wet, the children took a stick or a pen and carved their names into the wet clay. The lady also carved her name.

The lady bought the pot that day. She was very happy. Now she had something totally unique to take home with her. This special pot would remind her of this country. She could show it to her friends. She would paint it pretty colors and keep it in her house.

When it was time to leave the country, the lady wrapped her special pot in a thick blanket. She gave it to her friend and asked her friend to ship it to her in a package, because it was too big to take on her journey.

The friend was careful with the pot and put it in a package. Then the friend mailed the package. It took many weeks to arrive. The lady waited and waited. She was excited. She told people about her special pot. On the day the package came to her house, the lady was so happy! Her pot was here!

She opened the box. Very carefully she opened the thick blanket.

Oh no! Her pot was broken! It sat inside the blanket in many pieces. Big pieces. Small pieces. Tiny pieces. She could never put them back together and make it beautiful like before. She was very sad.

Her special pot. It was so valuable to her. It was special and worth much to the lady. But someone else did not think this. Someone who maybe threw her package into the boat. Or someone who knocked her package over or put heavy packages on top of it. Someone was not careful with her pot. They did not try to be careful and keep it from breaking. They did not think her package was special and worth much. Now it was broken.



Do not feel sad for the lady. She has many other special things from that country that she can look at and remember. Now she uses her pot to teach a lesson. She learned this lesson from what happened to her special pot. The pot taught her that if something is precious, worth much to you, it may not be precious to someone else. You should take care of what is precious and be careful not to let it get broken. And do not give it to someone who does not think it is special and will not be careful with it.

There are some precious things in your life that you should be careful with. These things are worth much and are valuable. They are worth more than any clay pot. They are special, and you do not want them to be broken.

These are not things like pots or jewels or other special things you may have. These are so much more precious. They are your relationships. The people you love. The things in life that are really important to you. Your relationship with God. Your family. Your friends.

We will talk about these precious things and learn how we can be careful with our relationships and keep them valued, precious, special.

Craft – Decorate Pot

Have one small pot (or cup or canvas, etc.) for each lady. Each day they will have time to decorate. Use paint or pens to write their names on their pot. Then they can paint them how they like.

Talk about how these pots will remind them of the precious things in their lives, to be careful with them and treat them as precious and valued. Have some time to decorate. Then set the pots outside to let the paint dry. Keep them in a dry place for the next day.



Game – Name Toss

This game is to let the women get to know each other a little. Have a small time for talking together, then have all the women get in a circle. Sit down. Starting with yourself, say your name and where you live. Let each woman say her name and where she lives. This will let the women make new friends and know more about the people they are with. Tell the women to pay attention to the names. It will be important to remember them later in the game.

After that, have each woman say her name again and one thing about her that makes her unique, different, and special. It may be something that she likes to do, such as drawing, sewing, reading,

or playing with her children. Or something about who she is, such as she is shy, or she loves to talk, or likes to make new friends. This will help the ladies understand that they are all different, and that God made each of us different. It is good to be unique. That is part of what makes us special.

Now stay sitting down for the game. Take a small bag filled with rice, tied shut (or a bean bag, or a ball). You must say a woman's name, then throw the bag to her. She must say another woman's name and throw the bag to that woman. This game should go very fast. Playing the game will help the women to remember the names they just learned.

SESSION 2

You Are Precious

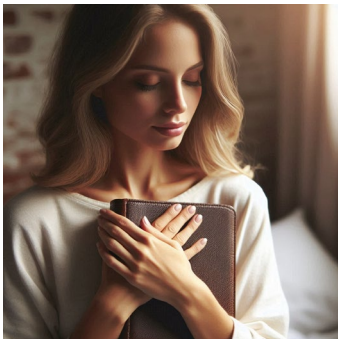
BIBLE STUDY

A precious possession is something you own. Something that belongs to you. You think it is very special. It is valuable to you. It is worth so much to you that you would not sell it. You would not give it to someone else. You keep it and are careful with it because you want it to always be a nice thing that you have.

Remember the lady and her special pot? Her special pot was a precious possession to her. It was worth much to her. It may not have been special to others, but it was valuable to her. Because it was valuable to her, it was important, and should be cared for.

Today, we will talk about a very precious possession. This precious possession belongs to someone very important. Because it is precious to this Someone, it is important and valuable.

The precious possession belongs to the Someone who made it. The precious possession belongs to God. The precious possession is YOU.



Let's read what God says in His Word about you.
(*Read Psalm 139:1-18 out loud.*)

Now, let's look more closely.

IDEA: Have all the ladies read each verse out loud as you go through them but put their own names in every time it says "me" or "my" or "I."
Example: "Oh, Lord, You have searched Kimberly and known Kimberly."

If possible, give out papers of the passage with the "me" "my" and "I" words blank. Have them fill in their names and take the paper home to keep and read again and again.

- Verse 1: **God knows you.** The verse says "search" which means He has put effort and time into looking and finding. He knows what you look like and who you are. He knows what makes you smile, laugh, or cry. He knows what makes you angry or sad or happy. He knows every hurt you carry.
- Verse 2: **God knows what you do during the day.** The important things, and all the little things that you do not think are important. He knows everything you do, waking up, sleeping, household chores, cooking, taking care of children, everything, even everything you think and why.
- Verse 3: **God knows you better than you know yourself.** God knows everything you have ever done before in the past. He knows everything you are doing now in the present. He even knows everything that you will do in the future.
- Verse 4: **God knows what you say before you say it.** And He also knows why you say what you say. When you are going to say something, He knows all the thoughts behind it.
- Verse 5: **God is in front of you** and your life—He will lead you. **He is behind you**—He will support you and help you when you fall down. **He is beside you**—He will help you find the right way and be with you all the way. **He has laid His hand on you**—His hand is on your life.

He is involved in all of your life, and He cares. When you rest your hand on your child or wrap your hands around to pick up and hold him or her, it shows caring—God cares for you.

Verse 6: **It is impossible to understand how God can know you so deeply and perfectly and care for you so much.** How God can know even things that you do not know about yourself. It is knowledge that is high above us. Only God can understand this. We praise Him in wonder.

Verses 7-10: **God is everywhere.** There is no place in the whole universe where God is not. He is always with you, no matter where you go. He leads you, holds you and comforts you.

Verses 11-12: **God can see you.** There is no darkness that can fall upon us that He cannot make light. Darkness in the outside world or deep inside your heart is not fearful or powerful to Him.

Verse 13: **God is your Creator.** He made you just as you are. You are His. He knew you before you were ever born.

Verse 14: **God made you exactly as He wanted you to be.** He knew what your face would look like, and how tall you would be. He chose your face and your body for you. Sometimes women say they wish they had different eyes, or skin or hair of a different color, or a different body shape; but God made you the way He wanted you. He created you to have your personality, your talents, and your gifts. God is perfect. He does not make mistakes. When He made you, He did not make any mistakes.

Verses 15-16: **God knows every spot on you.** No, you are not perfect. No person is, because we are born into a world of sin and death. But you are just the way God made you to be. Before you were born, God knew exactly what you would look like right now. He knows what you will look like when you are old.

Verse 17: **God thinks about you.** This is wonderful! Not just everyone all at once. You.

Verse 18: **God's thoughts for us are more than we could count.** Have you ever seen the ocean? If you walk by the ocean, you walk on millions and millions of tiny pieces of sand. You could never count them all! God thinks of you even more times than that! How wonderful.



This chapter is a wonderful, beautiful chapter about how much God cares about you. You may think, this is nice, but it is not for someone like me. I am too bad a person. Or I am not like the person who wrote this chapter. Or I am not pretty. Or maybe God does not care about women. You may think of many reasons why this chapter may not be for you.

Here is one thing you should know: God wrote the Bible. He used men to write what He wanted to say. The Bible is all God's Word, and God's Word is for His children. If you have believed in Jesus as your Savior, then you are a child of God. God's Word is for you! The things in God's Word are there for you! They teach you about God, and how He wants you to live.

(Teacher—if these women are not believers, this would be a good time to tell them how they can believe in Jesus as their Savior.)

The man God used to write this chapter was David. He was a shepherd at first, a very lowly job. He took care of the sheep for his father. He was the youngest son. He did not have much honor. When he was older, God chose him to be the king of Israel. Now he had honor and he did many good things. But he

also fell into temptation and did very bad things. He was an adulterer and a murderer. He was not perfect, not at all! But he asked God to forgive his sins, and God forgave him. God did not give up on him because he had done wrong, or because he was from a lowly job, or because he was the youngest. God chose him. God cared for him. God thought about him, more than the sand on the sea.

God cares for you too. You are not perfect. You may not have the most honor or the highest job. That does not matter. God loves you. He made you. He cares for you. He thinks of you, more than the sand on the sea.

You may be thinking, does this mean for women, too, or just for men? Maybe God only cares for men. Maybe women are not very important to God.

We will talk about some women in God's Word, and you will see if He cares for women or not. If they are important to Him or not. If they are precious, and valuable.

I think, though, you may already know the answer. After reading this chapter, you know that God cares for you and thinks of you and made you just as you are. He loves you very much. Men and women and children are all loved by the God who made them. This means people who have done good things, and people who have made mistakes. Pretty people and people with beautiful hearts, and people who are not beautiful at all.

Remember the special pot that was valuable and precious to the woman who bought it? You are like that to God. He made you special. He thinks you are valuable. He cares for you because you are precious to Him.

This is not only what some people say. Later we will see about some women in the Bible, and you will know for sure from God's Word that this is true.

Craft – Encouragement Cards

Have one card or paper for each woman, with coloring pencils or pens. Tell the women, if they met a new friend and wanted her to know how valuable she was to God, what would they write in a card to her? Ideas would be to write one of the verses from Psalm 139, or special words from that chapter, or a personal message.

Have each woman write a card of encouragement and hope. They do not know who the cards are for. When they are finished writing, they can decorate their cards to look pretty, using stickers or ribbons or whatever materials you have. Or you could teach the women to draw pretty flowers or designs around the edges. Or they could get together in groups, and each add one special design to each card.

Have the women put their finished cards in a bag that you will keep until the end of the seminar.



Game – Waterpot Relay

Who has the most water?

Separate women into four teams. Tell each team to line up in a straight line. Give the first woman in each team a water pot filled with water. She may carry it on her hip or her head. She must walk to a certain spot, then back. Then she must give the pot to the second lady. The second lady carries the pot to the spot, then back. Then she gives the pot to the third lady, then the fourth.

When all four teams are finished, look in their pots. The team who has the most water still in their pot wins.

Talk about how they treated their pots with much care because they did not want to spill the water. That is how we take care with things that are precious to us. We make sure we do not drop them. We do not rush and throw them around and act like they are not important.

SESSION 2

BIBLE STORY - RUTH PART 1

In the Bible, there are many stories about women. When we read these stories in God's Holy Book, we can know how God thinks about women, and how God acts to women.

In Genesis chapter 16, a young woman is running away. Her name is Hagar. She was a servant of Abraham and Sarah. When that couple sinned by trying to make God's promise happen by their own works, Hagar was given to Abraham as a concubine and became pregnant. Her child's name would be Ishmael. But Abraham's wife, Sarah, was very jealous of Hagar, and acted very badly to her. Hagar ran from her suffering and was alone in the wilderness.

But God saw her. He knew what had happened to her. God sent His angel to talk to her and help her. Hagar knew God saw her and cared for her. The world had treated her badly. Abraham did not seem to care. Sarah was angry. Hagar was away from family and friends. But she was not forgotten. The God who created her was watching her. He cared. God took care of Hagar and gave her what she needed. Hagar gave God a name. She called Him El-Roi, *the God who sees me*. Her son Ishmael's name means *God hears*.

This is only one story about one woman. There are many other stories. In John 4, Jesus talked to a woman who was a very bad sinner. People had probably rejected her because of her bad life. Jesus did not reject her. Jesus knew that all people are sinners. He talked with her and told her how she could have eternal life. The disciples were surprised to see Jesus talking with a woman. But Jesus cared for women while He was on earth, and He still does today.

Today, our story is about a woman named Ruth. There is a whole book in the Bible about her. She was not an amazing leader. The Bible does not say she was beautiful. People did not know her because she had so many talents. No, she was a normal woman like you and me. She had many problems. She had happy days and sad days. Through it all, we see in God's Holy Book how God cared for her and had a plan for her life.

Let's look at Ruth.

(Teacher—open your Bible to the book of Ruth and read Chapter 1:1-18 out loud.)

Ruth lived in a different country than God's people, the Israelites. The people in her country did not worship the one true God. They worshipped idols that people made instead of the God who made them.

But Ruth married a man who believed in God. Maybe things were going to be happy now? No. Her husband and her husband's father died. Now she was a widow. What could she do? Where could she go? Who would take care of her?

It seemed like everything was wrong. How could good come from this sad time?

But God was watching. He cared about Ruth. He had a plan for her.

Ruth could have left her husband's mother. She could have gone back to her home and family. But Ruth made a decision. She decided to stay with her new mother-in-law. She decided to leave her home and go to a new place. And she left the idols of her own people to believe in the one true God.

This decision was the beginning of a great adventure. Ruth did not know what would happen. Ruth and her mother-in-law had no husbands or fathers to help them.

But they had God. And they trusted Him. They did not know then, but God had planned wonderful things for Ruth. Ruth was precious to God. Precious, special, valuable, worth much. Just as you are.

God was going to take care of Ruth. We will find out more tomorrow.

SESSION 2

DRAMA - RUTH PART 1

Have some of the ladies act out the first chapter of Ruth up until verse 18. You will need actors for:

Ruth

Naomi

Orpah

The father and husbands

Do a drama on the trip to Moab, the weddings, the death of husbands and Ruth's decision to stay with Naomi.

When this is finished, talk about how the ladies would feel if this had happened to them. Some may not know how the story ends. How would they feel if this had happened to them? If their husband died, father-in-law died, and they were going to leave their country to go with their mother-in-law to a new country? What would they be afraid of? What bad things might happen? Would they want to go? Would it be hard to trust God?

Then look at some verses that would help them anytime they are in a scary situation like this, to help them trust God.

Read Proverbs 3:5-6 out loud.

How would these verses help Ruth right then? How would these verses help us in our lives?

Read Isaiah 41:10 out loud.

How would this verse help Ruth right then? How would this verse help us in our lives?

Say Isaiah 41:10 together over and over again to memorize it. Talk about how when they are afraid, they can remember this verse in their minds and say it.



SESSION 3

Your Relationships Are Precious – Part I

(Teacher—Bring your clay pot to class. Pass the pot around. Ask ladies how they would treat this pot if they thought it was very valuable. How would they treat the pot if they thought it was not very valuable? How we treat things shows how precious or not precious we think they are.)

With God

Last session, we talked about a very precious creation and possession of God. This special creation is you.

Your relationship with God is also a very precious, special thing. You should be careful with it. You should not act about it in a careless way. You do not want to do anything that will cause trouble in your relationship with God. What can cause trouble? Sin. Sin in our lives is treating this precious relationship in a careless way. It is like throwing this pot on the ground, not being careful. This does not please God.

How can you take care of your relationship with God?

1. **Pray.**

Read James 5:16 out loud.

In any special relationship, it is important to talk. You can talk to God anytime, about anything. You can tell Him about your day, about your feelings. You should thank Him for what He has done for you. If you have sinned, done wrong, you should ask Him to forgive you. You can tell God about your fears. You can ask Him to help you. You can ask God to help your friends and your family. You can talk to God about anything. You should pray every day.

2. **Read your Bible.**

Read Joshua 1:8 out loud.

In any special relationship, it is important to talk, but it is also important to listen. You talk to God when you pray. God talks to you through His Holy Word, the Bible. When you read the Bible, you learn about God. You learn what God is like. You learn how He acts toward His people. You also learn how He wants you to live. If you do not listen to God's instructions, how can you know what is right and wrong? You should read the Bible every day.

3. **Obey God.**

Read I Samuel 15:22 out loud.

Do what God's Word says. If your children say they love you, but they disobey you, your relationship with them is not as good as it should be. You may say you love God, but do you obey Him? You may do good, like the Israelites used to give sacrifices, but what is it worth if you do not obey what He tells you to do?



With Family

There are other precious things in your life. The most precious, valuable, special thing should be your relationship with God. Other special things in your life are your relationships with others. Your relationship with your family is valuable and special. You should be careful with it. How can you be careful with your relationship with your family? Obey God's Word. We will look at how God wants wives and mothers to live.

How does God want the wife to be?

1. **God wants her to help her husband.**
God made the woman because it was not good for the man to be alone. The wife is a helper made just right for what her husband needs.
Read Genesis 2:18, 21-25 out loud.
2. **God wants her to love her husband.**
Feelings of love and romance may come and go, but godly love is a choice.
Read Titus 2:4 out loud. The list of how real love acts is in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8.
Read the passage out loud.
3. **God wants her to respect her husband and submit to his leadership.**
Read Titus 2:5 and Ephesians 5:22-25 out loud.

Now we need to talk about a problem that happens sometimes. Through history, some people have taken God's commands for wives and used them for evil. God never intended His rules to be used to make women feel like they are less valuable than men or should be treated unkindly. God values women very much. He has from the beginning. If you read the very beginning of the Bible, in Genesis, when God made the world, many times He looked at what He had made and said it was good. Genesis 1:31 says, *Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.* But in Genesis 2:18, for the very first time, God said that something was not good. The thing that was not good was that man was alone.

The thing missing in God's beautiful creation was a woman. She was the completion of God's creation plan. And Eve was given her name because it means the *mother of all living*. God gave women something men could never have, the ability to bring life into the world. This makes women a very precious part of God's world and His plan for families.

Another reason we know women are valuable to God is that they are made in the image of God. Being made in God's image was not something only for man. The Bible says clearly in Genesis 1:27, *So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.*

Because God commands a woman to submit to her husband, some people have taught that all women should submit to all men. But if you read the verses carefully, it is clear that God is telling a woman to submit to her own husband. It says in Ephesians 5:24, *to their own husbands*. God also commands a husband to love His wife and treat her well. God wants the godly husband and wife to be like a picture of Christ and His church. Christ loves the church and gave Himself for it, and the church is to submit to and serve Christ.

When a husband and wife are both obeying God, their marriage relationship honors God and shows Christ to the world. So, a wife submitting to her husband is not a lowering thing, but a way of honoring Jesus. Her job under the husband's authority is the role God assigned to help the family do well. God sees her obedience to Him and will reward it.



How does God want the mother to be?

1. **God wants her to know her children are a gift from God.**
Read Psalm 127:3-5 out loud.
2. **God wants her to love her children.**
Read Titus 2:4 out loud.
3. **God wants her to teach her children what is right and wrong.**
Deuteronomy 6:7 says that parents should teach their children about God all day long, when they're sitting, walking, or lying down. Colossians 3:16 talks about memorizing God's Word, teaching and giving advice, and singing songs of praise to God all the time.

So, helping children to grow spiritually is an all-day, everyday job.
Read Deuteronomy 6:7 and Colossians 3:16 out loud.

God wants a mother to teach her children to do what is right, but also not to do what is wrong, through instruction and discipline. She should train them to be good women and men for the Lord. Proverbs 13:24 says that if we don't punish our children when they do wrong, then we don't really love them.
Read Proverbs 29:15 and 17 out loud.

You know that family relationships can be wonderful, or they can be terrible. In the Bible story of Jacob in Genesis 29-33, he had two wives, Rachel and Leah. God's design is for one man and one woman. When we go against God's design, it does not have God's blessing and will have trouble. Rachel and Leah were jealous of each other. They were angry or worried. Because they could not love and forgive each other, they could not help their husband as he needed to be helped, and their children grew up to be jealous of each other also.

We can learn much from the stories in the Bible about women. In Judges 16, Delilah used Samson's love for her to get what she wanted. But she destroyed him. In Genesis 25-27, Rebekah loved one son more than the other son, and she and her husband made the problems between their sons worse.

Some women did wrong in their relationships and destroyed what could have been precious. Other women in the Bible did right in their relationships. They loved and served and kept those relationships precious and worth much. Like Priscilla, who worked along with her husband Aquila as a team in Acts 18. In 1 Samuel 1, Hannah prayed for a son, and then she gave that son back to the Lord to serve Him. The Bible says in 2 Timothy 2:5 that Timothy's mother and grandmother raised him to be godly and follow the Lord, and he became a great man for God.

God wants what is best for us, and His way really is the best way to be happy and content.

As you go through life as a single woman or as a wife or a mother, you will need strength to do and be what God wants you to be. That strength comes from God.

Read Philippians 4:13 out loud. Through Christ we have strength to forgive, and love, and obey, and serve. Just like Ruth got her strength from God, we can also get strength from Him for each day. Today we will find out more about what happened to Ruth, and how God had a plan for her, even though she did not know what that plan is.

Craft – Decorate Pot

Let the ladies work on decorating their pots.

Talk about how each pot is different. Let women show their pots. Just as each pot is decorated differently, so each person is different. The differences make us special and unique. You all look different and many times you act different. Be glad for the differences! The pots look beautiful. Special. Unique. Just like you.



Game – Team Waterpot Relay

Game for relationships with family—working together, teamwork.

Make teams of four women each. Have each team stand by a bucket or wide-top pot filled with water. At a distance only a few steps away, have another pot for each team that is empty. When the game starts, the four women must try to get as much of the water from the full pot to the empty pot before time runs out using only their hands!



They may make their own strategy, deciding to cup water and run all at once, or stand in a line and pass it to one another, etc. When time runs out, the team with the most water in the second pot wins.

Talk about how in a family, each person must do his and her part to make the family successful. The wife has a very important part, the husband has a very important part, even the children have important parts. This is how God planned it. He wants the family to work together, like a team, and each person should do his and her best.

SESSION 3

BIBLE STORY – RUTH PART 2

(Teacher—Start by asking what happened to Ruth in the story last time. Let two or three of the ladies answer, then you tell the story from there. Read Ruth 1:18–3:9 out loud. Tell the story with much excitement. It is a wonderful story!)

Ruth had decided to stay with Naomi. She decided to go to a new land, a new people, and she chose to believe in the one true God. You can imagine how she may have felt as they took the long journey back to Naomi's old home.

They got closer and closer to Naomi's home. People stopped. They stared. They ran up to Naomi. Where was her husband? Where were her two sons? What had happened in the foreign land?

The people surely looked at Ruth with much curiosity. She looked different from them. She probably spoke a different language or with an accent.

Naomi was not happy. She said, *"Do not call me Naomi [which means Pleasant]; call me Mara [which means Bitter], for the Almighty has dealt very bitterly with me."* Naomi seemed angry at God. It seems she felt God had been mean to her and done bad things to her. But Naomi did not seem to remember that her family disobeyed God. They went to Moab, a land of idol worshipers. Her sons married women of another religion. God had told His people not to do this.

But even in their disobeying, God was going to make a good thing. He was going to bring Ruth to His people and to Him. He was going to use Ruth in an important way.

Naomi was bitter, but the Bible does not tell us one word of bitterness or unhappiness from Ruth. Ruth did not complain. She did not get angry with God. Even though she had only believed in God for a short time, it seems she trusted Him very much.

Now Naomi and Ruth were home, but they were poor. How could they get food? In Israel, the poor people could go to fields and pick up the corn that the field workers left behind. God had told His people this was how the poor could work and eat. Ruth went out and by chance she found a field that belonged to a man named Boaz, a rich relative of Naomi's. But it was not chance. God was working everything as He had planned.

Ruth was a hard worker. When Boaz came to the field, he noticed her. He asked who she was. Then he went to talk with her. He told her not to go to other fields but to only work in his field. He let her work with his workers and stop to drink when she was thirsty.

Ruth was amazed. She bowed and asked why Boaz was being so nice to her, a foreigner. Boaz told Ruth that he had heard about the good things she had done for Naomi and how she was taking care of Naomi. He said, (Read Ruth 2:12 out loud). Boaz let her eat with his people. Then he told his workers to let extra food fall so she could have more.

Ruth had gotten a good reputation, a good testimony. She had done good things for Naomi. Now Boaz was doing good things for her.

Ruth went home excited. When Naomi saw how much food she had, she was surprised. Ruth told her everything. Naomi praised God. She knew Boaz was her relative. She also knew the customs of her people. Naomi finally understood that God was going to take care of them.

Ruth worked in Boaz's fields for some time. Then Naomi told Ruth to do a strange thing. She told Ruth to wash, put perfume on, and go to where Boaz would be sleeping outside on the threshing floor. When he slept, she should lie down at his feet.

This sounded very strange. But Ruth obeyed her mother-in-law. She went to the fields. Boaz had eaten and drunk, and he went to sleep near a pile of corn. Ruth walked up to him softly, took the blanket off his feet, and lay down.

At midnight, Boaz woke up. There was a woman at his feet! He said, *"Who are you?"*

Ruth said, *"I am Ruth, your maidservant. Take your maidservant under your wing, for you are a close relative."* This was a very different culture. Ruth was asking Boaz to take care of her because he was a relative of her dead husband. She was asking him to marry her!

What would happen? What would Boaz say? Find out next session!

SESSION 3 DRAMA - RUTH PART 2

Act out Ruth's story, from the beginning up until Ruth asks Boaz to take care of her. Use most of the ladies. If there is a man there, he could be Boaz, or a woman could read Boaz's lines from the Scriptures.

Actors for:

Ruth

Naomi

Orpah

Husbands and father

The Israelites who talk to Naomi and about Ruth

People in Boaz's field picking corn

Boaz



Ask the ladies how they would feel if this was happening in their lives. How would it feel to go to a different country? How would it feel to be poor and low-class and a foreigner, having to pick up the corn other people dropped or left behind? How would you feel if you were told to go sleep at a man's feet and ask him to "spread his skirt" over you? (*Teacher—let ladies laugh about how embarrassing this would be and enjoy talking about how they would feel.*) What could Boaz say? Let ladies give ideas of how Boaz may act. Tell them you will end the story tomorrow.

Read Jeremiah 29:11 out loud.

How would this verse have helped Ruth right then? How will this verse help us?

Read Proverbs 31:10 out loud.

How would this verse have helped Ruth right then? How will this verse help us?

Read Proverbs 31:30. Say it over and over again together to memorize it. Talk about how they can say this verse in their lives to remember how being what God wants is most important, and to have a good reputation like Ruth.

SESSION 4

Your Relationships Are Precious – Part II

With Friends

We have talked about how your relationship with God is precious and should be cared for. We have also talked about your relationships with the people in your family. There are other relationships that should be precious and valuable to you. These are the relationships with the people you go to when you need to talk or cry or laugh. They are your friends.

Some women have many friends. Some have few. However many friends you have, they are special, and your relationship with them is important. Did you know that there is advice in the Bible on not just how to be a good wife and mother, but also how to be a good friend? God has given commands and help in His Word for every part of our lives, even our relationships with our friends.

Most of the time, it is easy to keep our friendships. We visit or call and talk about anything. Sometimes important things; sometimes things that are not very important. We laugh and sometimes we tell things that are sad. We like our friends and they like us. But it is not always so easy. There are things we may do that make our friendships almost break, like hitting a water pot on a table, almost knocking it off to crash on the floor. Even though our friendships are fun and we like them, we need to take care of them. We need to not do things that will hurt our friends. We need to do things that remind them that we care about them.

(Teacher - For today's lists on how to be a godly friend and godly witness, after you read the Bible section for each number, you can take time to discuss with the ladies how they could apply what God says to their lives in their culture. This is an opportunity for them to practice not just listening to God's Word, but thinking through how they can obey it. This can be a special time of learning how good it is to speak of spiritual things with other sisters in Christ, and also how they can help and encourage each other towards obedience in life.)

What kind of a friend does God want us to be?



1. **God wants us to be friends who love.**
Read 1 John 4:7 out loud.
2. **God wants us to be friends who listen.**
Read James 1:19 out loud.
3. **God wants us to be friends who encourage.**
Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11 out loud.
4. **God wants us to be friends who pray.**
Read James 5:16 out loud.

When we care for our friends and they care for us, our relationships with them will be strong and good. When you are being the right kind of friend, people will want to be around you, and in time you may get even more friends!

With the Lost Around Us

There is one other group of people we should be careful about. These people are not in your family. They are not your friends. You do not know their names. You have never been to their houses to visit. They are strangers to you. They are the people all around you who do not know Jesus, who see you and watch your life. When you go to buy food, lost people are there. When you go on a journey, lost people are there. There may be many people in your community who do not know Jesus yet.

The Bible says that we should let our lights shine in a dark world. The world is dark with sin. We can shine lights by our lives. Read Matthew 5:16 out loud. When we act in a way that is godly in front of the world, they can see that we are different. When we love people that other people do not love, they see that we are special. When we try to help people, when we are generous, when we forgive, when we are kind, all these things are light in a dark world. People should see that there is something special about you. You belong to God. You are His child. When people see you and watch your life, how you act and what you say, do they know that you belong to God?

How can you live in the world so people will see your light?

1. **Love others, and act toward them the way you would want them to act toward you.**
Read Matthew 7:12 and 22:37-40 out loud.
2. **Forgive when people do wrong things to you.**
Read Ephesians 4:32 out loud.
3. **Love other believers and do not talk bad about them.**
Read Ephesians 4:29 out loud.
4. **Stay away from sin.**
Read Romans 12:9 and 21 out loud.
5. **Do what is right even if no one else is doing the right thing.**
Read Luke 8:17 out loud.
6. **Tell them about your Savior.**
Read Mark 16:15 out loud.

The Bible says that when we let our lights shine, people will see our good works and they will glorify God. How wonderful it would be if your life was a praise to God! How wonderful if people in the world could see that you are different, special. Maybe they will want to know about the God you love.

Craft

Finish pots. Make sure the woman's name is on the pot somewhere—maybe on the bottom of the pot.

Tell the women that they will get to take their pot home and keep it. When they look at it, they will remember that they are God's precious possession, something He made and cares for very much.



Game – Gossip

To teach that gossiping hurts us, and usually is not even true.

Have all the women sit on the ground in a big circle. The first person thinks of something to say—anything. She can say something like, “A big tiger walked through the woods near my house,” or “Yesterday when I washed my clothes, I saw a small bird.” When she thinks of what she will say, she whispers it into the ear of the person sitting next to her on the right side. She can only whisper it one time.



Whatever the second person heard, she must whisper whatever she thinks it was into the ear of the person next to her. That woman must whisper it to the next woman until it gets all the way around the circle to the last woman. Then the last woman has to say loudly whatever she heard. Most of the time people hear the wrong thing and it gets worse and worse. By the end, usually the sentence is not anything like what the first woman said! It is very funny how it all gets messed up. Have the first woman say the sentence she started with to see what the real sentence was.

Talk to the women about how that is what happens when one person starts saying bad things about another person. One tells another, then another, and after some time, the rumor may not be anything like the truth. And it may be very hurtful to that person. The best way to keep this from happening is to not say bad things about other people, and not to share when someone tells a rumor to us.

Start the game again with another person saying something different. Play as many times as you want.

SESSION 4

BIBLE STORY - RUTH PART 3

(Teacher—Start by asking what happened to Ruth in the story last time. Let two or three of the ladies tell you parts of the story. When they get to where Ruth goes to Boaz, stop and you tell the story from there. Read Ruth 3:10 to the end out loud. Tell the story with much excitement. It is a wonderful story!)

Last time we talked about Ruth, she had gone to Boaz and asked him to be her husband! You may have wondered what Boaz would say or what he would do. Would he be shocked? Would he be angry?

Boaz was happy! He said, (Read Ruth 3:10-11 out loud.) He praised Ruth for her kindness and her virtue. He was glad she had not chased after a younger man. He said that everyone in the city knew she was virtuous.

What a wonderful thing for Boaz to say! Could people say that about you? Do people know that you are pure and kind?

Boaz said he would do his part as the male relative. In Boaz's culture, if a woman's husband died and they had no children, the closest male relative would marry the woman and their first child would carry the first husband's name so his family property and name would not be lost.

But Boaz told Ruth that he was not the closest male relative. There was one closer than he.

Now what would happen? This other man might marry Ruth instead!

But Boaz was wise. I think he loved Ruth and wanted her for his wife. He went to meet with this other relative. He told him there was some land Naomi was selling and he could buy it and keep it in the family. The man said he would take it. But then Boaz told him that if he took the land, he must also take Ruth as his wife.

This man did not want to marry Ruth. He said he could not do this. It was agreed that Boaz could marry Ruth. They showed the agreement by the man giving Boaz his shoe to show the deal was made. Now Boaz could marry Ruth! And he did. Boaz and Ruth were married, and God blessed them with a baby boy. The baby was named Obed.

When Obed grew up, he had a son named Jesse. When Jesse grew up, he had a son named David. You may know the story of young David killing a giant named Goliath with a sling and a stone. When David grew up, God made him king of Israel.

Ruth had been a stranger, a foreigner. She was different, a widow from a strange place.

But she trusted God her heavenly Father to take care of her. She worked hard. She was loyal. And she obeyed. In time, people not only accepted her, they praised her goodness and virtue.

And God blessed Ruth. He gave her a good, godly husband and a son. Ruth was the great-grandmother of King David. And David's family line went all the way down to the Lord Jesus Christ. So this woman, a different, lonely stranger, ended up belonging to the family line of the Messiah!

God loves women. He cares for them and has a plan for each one. He honors those who follow Him. God never forgot about Ruth for a moment, and even though life was hard for a time, Ruth kept trusting God, and finally much joy came to her.

SESSION 4 DRAMA - RUTH PART 3

Do the whole story of Ruth in a drama. Use all the ladies.

When the drama is finished,

Read Jeremiah 18:2-6 out loud.

Our lives are like wet clay in God's hands. Ruth let God shape her life and make it whatever He wanted. Our lives should be that way too. We should let God decide what our lives are to be. We should trust Him, because He cares for us. He knows what is best for us and what we should be.

Read Jeremiah 31:3 out loud.

What would this verse have reminded Ruth in her life?

How will this verse help us during hard or confusing times in our lives?

Say Jeremiah 31:3 over and over again together to memorize it. Talk about how they can say this verse in their lives to remember how much God loves them. He always has. And He always will.



CONCLUSION

BE BEAUTIFUL INSIDE AND OUT

Have women bring their finished pots to the lesson. Give them a few minutes to show their pots to each other and look at all the other pots.

Then tell all the women to sit down and hold their pots in their laps. Tell the women to look at the pots they painted. Do they like what they did? Are they proud of the job they did? The pot you made is yours. It is something you made beautiful. But it is not just for beauty. Is your pot useful? What can you use your pot for?

(Let different women give ideas on how they can use their pots.)

Good. Some pots will be used for delicate things. Some will be used for hard work. In fact, each pot may have a different use. But they are all useful. You get to choose what you will do with your pot.

The pot is like your life. God created you. He made you to be who you are and He loves you very much. Now He wants to use you. Are you useful? Are you in God's hands, waiting for His command to obey? Or have you chosen your own way? Do you look at other women and think they are more useful than you? That is not good. God made you for a certain reason. You may have a different use than other women, but that does not mean your use is less important. God has a purpose for each person He has created. When we are in His hands, letting Him control our lives, we are being useful in His kingdom, doing just what He wants.

And that makes us beautiful.

Women want to be beautiful. They like to look in the mirror and see someone pretty. They like other people to look at them and think they are pretty. That is why companies make millions of dollars by selling face creams and powders and lip colors. Women will spend much time and money to make themselves beautiful.

We all want to be beautiful, don't we? On television and the internet, people tell us to buy this product, or wear these clothes, or act like this person, and these things will make us beautiful. But what really makes us beautiful? Most people think of beauty as what you look like on the outside. That is not so. Real beauty comes from the inside of a woman. A truly beautiful woman has a beautiful heart.

Does God care about beauty? Yes, He does. He wants you to be beautiful. But He does not care as much about your outside as much as your inside. God wants you to be beautiful inside.

We see some beautiful women in the Bible. In 1 Kings 21, Queen Jezebel was very beautiful on the outside, but the inside of her was dark and rotting. She was evil and her beauty did not last. In Ruth, the Bible does not say if Ruth was beautiful on the outside, but you can tell she was beautiful on the inside, and so when you think of her, you think of a beautiful woman. In the book of Esther, Queen Esther was beautiful on the outside, but it was the beauty on the inside that gave her the courage to save her people.



It is okay for a woman to be beautiful on the outside. But it is even more important to be beautiful on the inside. That is the kind of beauty that lasts. In time, women get wrinkles and their bodies change. Outside beauty does not last forever. But inside beauty never gets old.



Proverbs 31:30 says, (Read Proverbs 31:30 out loud.) Charm is not always sincere. Beauty does not last. But a woman who fears and follows the Lord is a truly great woman. Her beauty is inside. Be a woman who fears and follows the Lord. Let that be the most beautiful thing about you.

Look at your pots again. They are beautiful, but they are useful also. Be beautiful for God, inside and out. Let Him use you to do His plan for your life.

What is His plan for your life? To obey what you learn in His Word.

Beyond that? You don't know. But God does! Read your Bible each day, and pray, and let God show you what He wants you to do as you obey His Word each day.

Craft – Sign Cards

Have women sit at tables, each with a pen or pencil. Take the encouragement cards they made out of your bag. Give the first card to the first woman to sign. After she signs the first card, she can pass it to the next person, and down the line until every woman has signed every card.

Or, you can have all the cards set out on the tables, and the women can walk around signing each one. When they are finished, put them back in your bag again.



Game – Draw Self on Head

God sees better than we do!

Give each woman a piece of paper and a pencil or pen. Tell the women to put the paper on their heads. Now, they should hold the paper on their heads with one hand and use their other hand to draw a round circle for their face. Bring the pencil down and put the pencil on the floor. Tell the women to pick up their pencils and draw hair on the paper. The paper is still on their heads, so they will not be able to see what they are drawing. This is a very funny game. Tell the women to put their pencils down, then pick them up again and draw two eyes. Pencils down. Pick them up again and draw a mouth. Then a nose. Then eyebrows. Then ears. Then a necklace under the chin.



Now that they are finished, let them take the papers off their heads and look at the pictures they drew of themselves. The pictures will probably look terrible, but that is the funny part! Explain how trying to draw a picture when we cannot see is silly. It does not work. Trying to live our lives our own way when we cannot see the future is silly also. Our lives may turn out all confused and messy, like our pictures. The real person who should draw pictures of us should be an artist, and he needs to be able to see what he is drawing. The real One who should decide our lives is God, who made us and who can see the future and knows His plan for our lives.

CONCLUSION BIBLE STORY - ESTHER

(Teacher—study the book of Esther and tell the story with as much time as you have. Finish the story with this:)

Did Esther get to be queen just because she was beautiful or was there something more about Esther? All the women who went before the king were beautiful. Esther was special. She did not only have a beautiful face; she had a beautiful heart. She was beautiful on the outside, but she was also beautiful on the inside. Her trust in God was beautiful.

Esther was also wise. She knew that she needed God's help. She knew she needed God's courage. Esther prayed to God, and she asked other people to pray for her. She knew that without God's help, she could do nothing.

The name Esther means star. Esther was a star. She let God's light shine through her. She was courageous and good. Esther is still remembered now, thousands of years later, because she had inner beauty and courage. No one knows now what her face looked like, but her inner beauty has lasted.

CONCLUSION DRAMA OF CHOICE



Ladies get together in groups and each group decide what to do for a dramatic presentation.

They can act out a Bible story that they like. Or they can act out a certain situation in life where there is a problem, and they use God's Word to fix the problem. Or some of the women can start a situation, then ask the ladies, "What would you do if this happened to you?" Then they can try to find Bible verses that would help the problem and talk about what would be the best thing to do.

(Teacher - Put women in groups to pray for each other. Then come together and end by praying for each woman by name, that she will live what she has learned. Before they leave, have all of the encouragement cards in a bag or on a table, and each woman chooses one to take home with her.)

Things for each woman to take home:

- The pot she made
- Her self-on-head drawing
- The Psalm 139 paper with her name in the blanks
- An encouragement card
- A paper with all the verses from the seminar to study more at home