

A CHOSEN FEW





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*Becoming a Woman
God Can Use*

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Dedication

To my daughters, Shannon and Emily.
May you always seek to honor God in all you do.





Acknowledgments

In memory of my mother, Jane McWhorter, who provided a powerful example to my girls and to me of just how a Christian woman should live.

Many thanks to my husband, Tony, for his unwavering support.

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Introduction

A few years ago I was asked to present a devotional about women and became intrigued by the characteristics displayed in the lives of various women discussed in the Scripture. This became a fascinating personal Bible study, and I wondered what I could do to develop those same characteristics in my own life. This book is the result.

This study isn't designed to be an in-depth look at the lives of various women in the Bible. Rather, it is designed to help each woman who reads it to take a deeper look at these characteristics so that she might develop them in her own life.

The chapter questions are not intended to be fill-in-the-blank rote recall from the lesson but questions to provide a springboard for class discussion. They may be used for general discussions or specific topics for small groups, with a sharing and tying together at the end. These same questions can provide an avenue for reflection if an individual is using this book as a basis for personal study. It is my prayer that everyone studying this material will grow in her efforts to serve the Lord.

—Kathy McWhorter Kendall



A Strong Woman Versus a Woman of Strength

A strong woman works out every day to keep her body in shape.

A woman of strength kneels in prayer to keep her soul in shape.

A strong woman isn't afraid of anything.

A woman of strength shows courage in the midst of her fear.

A strong woman won't let anyone get the best of her.

A woman of strength gives the best of herself to everyone.

A strong woman makes mistakes and avoids the same in the future.

A woman of strength realizes life's mistakes can also be God's blessings and capitalizes on them.

A strong woman walks sure-footedly.

A woman of strength knows God will catch her when she falls.

A strong woman wears the look of confidence on her face.

A woman of strength wears grace.

A strong woman has faith that she is strong enough for the journey.

A woman of strength has faith that it is in the journey that she will become strong.

—Unknown



Discovering Biblical Motivation



*Call to Me, and I will answer you,
and show you great and mighty things, which you
do not know.*

—Jeremiah 33:3



I am the mother of two daughters. One is a teenager. The other, a recent college graduate, has just crossed the threshold of independence. It is an exciting time in both of their lives. Their opportunities are limitless. They can become astronauts, be on the Supreme Court, win the Nobel Prize, or whatever they want to do. I saw a sweatshirt that read “Girls Can Change the World.” In these times, that is a distinct possibility.

In a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay, some for honor and some for dishonor. Therefore if anyone cleanses himself from the latter,

he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the Master, prepared for every good work (2 Timothy 2:20–21).

Proven Fit for Use

Despite any preconceived notions to the contrary, God has always used women to accomplish His will. Examples include Jochebed and Miriam, Pharaoh's daughter, Hannah, Deborah, Jael, Esther, and Naaman's wife's servant girl. Paul mentions several women in his epistles, some of whom are not named.

- ✱ "Not a few of the leading women joined Paul and Silas" (Acts 17:4).
- ✱ "Prominent women as well as men" believed (Acts 17:12).
- ✱ "A woman named Damaris" believed after Paul's speech on the Areopagus (Acts 17:34).
- ✱ Priscilla, Phoebe, Mary, Persis, Tryphena, and Tryphosa were hard workers. Rufus' mother, a woman named Julia, and Nereus' sister are greeted (Romans 16).
- ✱ The book of Philemon is addressed to Philemon, "the beloved Apphia," and Archippus.

The Master's Choice

Satan has also used women to try to thwart God's will. Notable examples include Jezebel, Delilah, Eve, Sapphira, and the foreign wives mentioned in Ezra 9 and 10.

God uses women today to implement His will on earth. But

Satan also uses women to further his cause. If God isn't using us,

*If God isn't
using us, Satan is.*

Satan is. Our sins don't have to be visible. They can be subtle, but they will still keep us from being faithful servants for God's use. Some people are just evil, through and through, but not all bad people are thoroughly wicked. Some just made a few wrong decisions. Some of the bad women we read about in the Bible had good attitudes and were willing to change when confronted about their sins. Examples include Rahab, the woman who anointed Jesus, and the Samaritan woman at the well. The past is done; it cannot be changed. But who we are becoming does matter. We need to learn to put the past behind us.

Discover: "to see, find, or become aware of (something) for the first time" and "to learn or find out (something surprising or unexpected)."

Our Patterns for Service

In this study, we will examine the Scriptures and look at the lives of several women and men God used. Remember, we are not delving into a detailed character study. We are looking at how God chose them for His use and then studying the characteristics of those chosen. They were simply ordinary women whom God chose to use to accomplish His purpose.

Consider what we want to discover in the following pages:

- * Why are these particular stories included in the Bible?
- * What does God want me to learn from these stories?

- ❁ Why did He choose these particular women instead of others?
- ❁ What qualities in their lives were notable and useful to God?
- ❁ How can we develop these same qualities in our own lives so that we can offer ourselves in service to Him?

Dear God,

We come before You with gratitude for all the blessings You have graciously given us. We truly want to become women You can use in Your service. We realize that we will have to work to acquire the qualities that will make us useful to You, and that this process may involve some changes in our lives. Help us as we study the lives of various women in the Bible. Help us examine the qualities found in their lives that enabled them to be used by You in Your service. Guide us as we seek to develop these same qualities in our own lives. May our efforts please You, and may we be found worthy of Your use.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Your Choices

1. Discuss a particular woman in the Bible whose story has always intrigued you. What is it about her life that has held your interest?

2. Look at the women briefly mentioned in our lesson today. Choose four characters and assign individuals or groups to research their stories, and share with the class the details of how God used each one to accomplish His will.

3. Take another look at the women mentioned in our lesson as instruments of Satan to accomplish his will. Again, have individuals or groups research and share the details of how these women were used by Satan for evil.

4. Has God changed His purpose for women since creation? Elaborate on your answer.

5. Has the role for women in the church changed? Or the nature of women's work? Discuss.

6. Discuss the possibility that the church in general might consider the role of women in accomplishing God's will of less impact than the role of men.

7. How are women in your congregation having an impact on your congregation?

8. How are women in your congregation impacting your community?

9. Discuss traits from 2 Timothy 2:24–25 that enable one to become useful to the Lord. How are these traits evangelistic?

Assisting in Spiritual Focus



I will make him a helper suitable for him.

—Genesis 2:18 (NASB)



As mentioned in the previous chapter, some women were used by God to accomplish His will, but some women were used by Satan to accomplish his. It is obvious that Priscilla was used by God and just as obvious that the wives of Solomon and the foreign wives of the Israelites were used by Satan. This lesson will help us see the incredible power of influence wives have on the lives of their husbands.

Priscilla (Acts 18)

Priscilla was the wife of Aquila, a native of Pontus. Aquila and Priscilla came to Corinth from Italy because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome. They were tentmakers. Paul, who was also a tentmaker, came to Corinth and stayed with them and worked with them.