

## GOD'S CALL – OUR RESPONSE

A 6 week study of four Bible Women who responded to God's call to be God's representative for a specific task or tasks. After looking at the four women we will look at what God expects of us today as we represent Him in His Kingdom.

### **Outline:**

#### **Week # 1**

Dorcas – The Gazelle  
Acts 9:32-43, Acts 6:1-7

#### **Week # 2**

Deborah – The Prophetess Warrior  
Judges 4:4-10 & 14 and 5:1-31

**Week # 3** – Priscilla the Wise Leader\Teacher  
Acts 18:2-3, 18&26, Romans 16:3&4  
I Cor. 16:19, 2 Timothy 4:19

#### **Week #4** – Esther the Chosen One

Esther 4-5:8, 8:1-6  
After reading the whole book of Esther  
Concentrate on the verses in chapter 4&5 & 8 as listed above.

**Week # 5** – \_\_\_\_\_ **(Your Name)** The Called One  
How do I know that God has called me to be a woman of God,  
Called to respond to His call on my life?  
See II Corinthians 5:11 to 6:2.

#### **Week # 6 (optional) Review, Sharing & Fellowship Time**

## FOUR IMPORTANT QUESTIONS

With each woman we look at (including ourselves) we need to ask the following questions:

1. How did she (or I) discover or know God was calling her(me) for a specific task?
2. What was her service or ministry she felt called to perform or complete?
3. What talents or gifts did she use in her calling?
4. What one or two words would you use to describe her?

### **Consider this:**

God has called me to be the right woman for the right reason at just the right time!

## GOD'S CALL – OUR RESPONSE

### Lesson # 1 – Dorcas – The Gazelle

A 6 week study of four Bible Women who responded to God's call to be God's representative for a specific task or tasks. After looking at the four women we will look at what God expects of us today as we represent Him in His Kingdom.

### Greetings and Opening Prayer

**Introduction:** Begin with personal greetings and opening prayer.

Today we want to look at a woman called Tabitha(Hebrew) or Dorcas(Greek) whose name in both languages means Gazelle.

What picture comes into mind when you think of a gazelle?

Do you know the meaning of your name? How do you live up to your name? Discuss for a brief time.

Now lets look at some background information regarding Dorcas and where her story takes place.

Dorcas lived in Joppa which is a seaport town 35 miles northwest of Jerusalem and ten miles from the town of Lydda, where Peter was staying. It seems a small group of believers had formed a home church here in Joppa soon after the resurrection. We aren't told just when it began but it was active and faithful and appeared to be connected with the greater body of believers since they were aware of Peter's activities.

### **Read: Acts 9:32-43**

1. Peter is included in this story by telling of the healing of a man in Lydda who had been paralyzed for 8 years. What is the significance of this miracle in light of what was happening amongst the believers in Joppa?

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2. Tabitha or Dorcas is referred to as a "disciple" or learner. A disciple is one who strives to imitate the teacher. How do you see Dorcas as an imitator of Jesus? What does this tell us about the ministry women had in the early church and still have in the church today?

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3. By the actions described in verses 37 & 38, how important was Dorcas to that community of believers? Was it only the women that felt her loss? Who went to ask Peter to come ASAP!? What did they expect Peter to do or do they just need his comfort in this time of grief? What does it tell us about Peter when he came?

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4. Read Acts 6:1-7 How important was the ministry of caring for the widows and the homeless in the early church? Who was assigned to take care of these people and what qualifications were they to have? What does this tell us about Dorcas?

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What can we apply from this story to our daily lives? Discuss

What are some practical ways we are able to imitate Jesus our teacher

**For larger groups: divide into smaller groups for prayer.**

Next Week: **Deborah the Prophetess -Judges 4:4-10,14 and 5:1-31**

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### Lesson # 2 – Deborah –God's Spokesperson

#### Greetings and Opening Prayer

**Introduction:** Last week we talked about Dorcas from the early church and today we will look at Deborah from the Old Testament during the time of the Judges. Deborah means "bee or wasp" in the Hebrew but to the Egyptians she was a symbol of regal power. Among the Greeks she was seen as "priestly"; as "one divinely illuminated". The Judges came after the death of Joshua. He led the people of Israel into the promised land and drove out the Canaanites as God had commanded. Time and time again the Israelites turned from God and did their own thing and God allowed them to be ruled by other nations. It wasn't until they would repent and cry out to God that He would once again rescue them. The people looked to Deborah, the prophetess for wise counsel and direction. Now, once again the Canaanites had recaptured the land and were determined to drive out the Israelites.

#### **Read: Judges 4:4-14 and 5:1-31**

1. From verses 4-14 in chapter 4 what do we learn about Deborah? What kind of person is she? How does she relate?

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2. How do you think she discovered God's call on her life and what talents or gifts does she use in her ministry?

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3. What hindrances or excuses could she have used in her culture to avoid getting involved in this battle?

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What excuses do I use to keep me from using my strengths to do the work God is calling me to do?

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4. Read the song Deborah wrote in chapter 5 and discover other characteristics or gifts here you may not have seen earlier.

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5. What godly qualities does Deborah portray and what can we learn from her willingness to hear from God and respond in obedience? What one or two words would you use to describe her?

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**For larger groups: divide into smaller groups for prayer.**

(You may wish to spend time in prayer before beginning the study so no one will miss out on the prayer time if they need to leave early)

**Next Week:** Back to the New Testament we now look at Priscilla in **Acts 18:2-3, 18&26, Romans 16:3&4, I Corinthians 16:19, and II Timothy 4:19**

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### Lesson # 3 – Pricilla –Partner in Ministry

#### Greetings and Opening Prayer

**Introduction:** We have looked at Dorcas and Deborah and observed how they responded to God's call to serve in their unique situations Today we look at Pricilla and find that we can't really study this woman without seeing how closely she's tied into ministry with her husband Aquila. These two show us a powerful partnership in ministry. I can relate to Pricilla since God called both my husband and me into ministry. I also know that with partners in ministry, each still needs to listen to God's instruction as well as work out differences in personality in order to best compliment one another in the work to which they are called.

**Read: Acts 18:1-3, 18&26, Romans 16:3&4, 1 Cor. 16:19, II Timothy 4:19**

1. Paul first meets Aquila in Corinth. What were Aquila & Pricilla doing in Corinth? Where were they from and why were they there?

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2. What is it in verse 18 that tells us that Paul had worked out a comfortable partnership with Aquila & Pricilla? What gifts do you think Pricilla might have used by having Paul in their home?

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3. Why might Pricilla have been the stronger or more outgoing one in the marriage and maybe even in the business relationship?

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What part might Pricilla have taken in instructing Apollos more fully the truth about Jesus? What does this tell us about Pricilla?

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4. In Romans 16:3&4 Paul expresses his appreciation for Pricilla and Aquila. What important facts do we learn about them in these verses?

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5. What might we learn from these relationships in finding mutual strength and encouragement from our partnerships? How might this relate to having been created in the image of God? What caution might we, like Pricilla, need to take in using our gifts in mixed company?

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**For larger groups: divide into smaller groups for prayer.**

(You may wish to spend time in prayer before beginning the study so no one will miss out on the prayer time if they need to leave early)

#### **For Next Week:**

Back to the Old Testament where we look at the book of Esther. In preparation read the whole book of Esther and then re-read, Esther chapter 4 and to 5:8, as well as 8:1-6. Try to answer again the four questions on the back of your outline.

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### Lesson # 4 – Esther –The Chosen One

#### Greetings and Opening Prayer

**Introduction:** The year after I finished my grade 12 the school drama club did the production called, "Esther". I remember the beauty of royal robes but I also remember the turmoil that Esther faced in being chosen as the Queen and still remain loyal to her Jewish heritage. Esther was chosen to be the Queen but now she had to make some life changing choices.

Have you ever found yourself in turmoil? You know you have to make a choice and if you speak out certain changes will have to take place. Share:

#### **Read: Esther 2:15-20, 4-5:8, 8:1-6**

1. After reading chapter 2:15-20 we know Esther is going to be walking a thin line of keeping her heritage secret and still keeping in touch with her uncle Mordecai. As a young woman in a unique position what other frustrations might she have had to face?

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2. Haman is the villain or the enemy in this plot. Mordecai and Esther had major conflicts to face and God had His hand in the outcome. What have been some major hindrances in your spiritual journey and how have you seen God's hand in the resulting choices you made?

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3. What was it that caused Mordecai so much distress? What was Esther's first response when she heard the reason for his reaction?

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What words of Mordecai made Esther change her mind about going to speak to the King?

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4. What advice did Esther give to Mordecai and the Jewish people? What does this tell us about her relationship with God?

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5. What are the strengths of character we see in Esther as she presents her request to the King? How was God at work behind the scene to answer the prayers of the Jewish people?

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6. God called Esther to be in the right place, for the right reason at just the right time. What one or two words would you use to describe her?

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What is it that God might be asking of you at this point in your life?

**For larger groups: divide into smaller groups for prayer.**

(You may wish to spend time in prayer before beginning the study so no one will miss out on the prayer time if they need to leave early)

**For Next Week:** Read II Corinthians 5:11-6:2

Write a paragraph as how this might apply to God's call on your life.

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### Lesson # 5 – Chosen & Called

#### Greetings and Opening Prayer

##### **Introduction:**

In the past some of us have shared our stories of how we first met Jesus and responded to God's call. Today let's allow the Holy Spirit to take us back to when we first knew that God was drawing us to let go of our own efforts to control our lives and allow Him to take over with His unconditional love and acceptance.

Lead in Prayer and then give time for those who wish to share.

1. After reading **Ephesians 2:8-10** what words of thanks enter your mind?

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2. In **Romans 8:29 & 30** we read that God chose and called us to belong to Him. Name at least four other benefits you enjoy as a result of being chosen and called.

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3. In **II Corinthians 5:11-6:2** Paul speaks of the new life we receive when we accepted God's free gift of salvation. What changes took place in your life as a result of this gift?

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4. According to Paul what two major changes ought to take place in how we see ourselves and in how we see others when we realize the importance of our calling?

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5. As God's Ambassadors what is the task that God has given us and how do you see yourself fulfilling this task?

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6. In representing Christ to others what important fact should we remember so as not to become overwhelmed with the task?

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**For larger groups: divide into smaller groups for prayer.**

(You may wish to spend time in prayer before beginning the study so no one will miss out on the prayer time if they need to leave early)

**For Next Week:** Re-read today's scripture passages.

Write a paragraph or two of the four women we studied and how each story made an impact on your life and stimulated you to reevaluate your commitment and challenge of God's call on your life. Come prepared to share your paragraph and what God has been showing you during this study.

For Lesson # 6

Spend time in prayer together either before or after your time of encouraging women to share the paragraphs they have written.

This session should be a time of reflection but also a time of rejoicing together. You may wish to have breakfast or lunch together.

Allow time for women to share their own spiritual growth stories.