



STUDY
GUIDE

VIRTUOUS WOMANTM EXCELLENCE

THE FELLOWSHIP OF CHRISTIAN ATHLETES®

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FCA Virtuous Woman

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We offer special thanks to the Memphis FCA boards and Female Ministry Team for their encouragement and prayer.

We would like to dedicate this work to the women who have invested spiritually in us throughout our lives, the Memphis area coaches and the precious girls in Memphis whom we serve.

The purpose of this study is to present key character traits using examples of women in the Bible.

The goal of the FCA Virtuous Woman Curriculum is to present to women in the arena of athletics the privilege and challenge of learning and living out Biblical Womanhood in all areas of life. This goal is accomplished by introducing character traits found in female biblical characters that they can model in their own personal life. This is a question-driven small group Bible study which promotes discussion and guides participants to discover truth for themselves as they process questions and answers from the group. The question set created for each session seeks to reveal God as He truly is, discover how He has revealed Himself in Scripture, correct inaccurate ideas about God, and address worldview issues with which women struggle today.

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EXCELLENCE

INTRO SESSION

Character Goal: Excellence is glorifying God by working whole-heartedly towards all He has given you to do.

Biblical Character: Jesus

Scripture Readings: John 17:1-18; John 19:17-18, 28-30

Discussion Questions:

- What does Jesus do as He prepares to depart this earth and go back to His heavenly Father?
- What does Jesus say is eternal life? Have you viewed “eternal life” in this way, and according to this definition would you say you have eternal life?
- How does Jesus say He brought God glory on the earth? What does this tell us about His character?
- In this passage Jesus tells us some specific things God gave Him to do and what He accomplished. Name a few. (Hint, they begin with “I”)
- What are some specific things God has given you to do in your life and on your team? What would it look like for you to accomplish these things and glorify God?
- Who exactly is Jesus praying for? What does this tell us about His heart for them?
- What are some specific things He is praying for them?
- If you are a follower of Christ, Jesus also prayed these things for you. How does this make you feel, impact the way you live, and relate to teammates?
- As Jesus was dying on the cross, He muttered the words, “It is finished.” What was He referring to?
- Jesus’ excellence to carry out God’s purpose for His life has eternally affected all mankind. Those who believe in His finished work on the cross will receive eternal life. Those who do not believe will experience eternal death and separation from Him. In what way has Jesus’ finished work affected your life?
- What does this story teach you about God? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ Jesus is the only person who was perfectly excellent in all things.
- ▶ We bring God glory when we pursue excellence by seeking to whole-heartily accomplish what God has given us to do.
- ▶ Our pursuit of excellence or lack thereof affects ourselves and others.

Training for Godliness

As an athlete, it is easy to believe that our main purpose is to score goals, build stats, win the championship, or possibly live up to a coach’s expectations. Have you ever considered that there is more to life than your sport? What do you see as “bigger” than your sport—things, beliefs, or attitudes that go beyond the court or field? According to the lesson on Jesus’ excellence, what is our ultimate purpose on this earth? How might your excellence in what God has given you to do affect someone else’s life? How might your lack to pursue excellence affect others and yourself? Give examples.

Memory Verse: *“I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.”*
John 17:4

Jesus Prays to Be Glorified

¹⁷After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:

“Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. ²For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. ³Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. ⁴I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. ⁵And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.

Jesus Prays for His Disciples

⁶“I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. ⁷Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. ⁸For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. ⁹I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. ¹⁰All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. ¹¹I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. ¹²While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

¹³“I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. ¹⁴I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. ¹⁵My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. ¹⁶They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. ¹⁷Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. ¹⁸As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world.

John 19:17-18 ¹⁷Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull (which in Aramaic is called Golgotha). ¹⁸There they crucified him, and with him two others—one on each side and Jesus in the middle.

John 19:28-30

The Death of Jesus

²⁸Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I am thirsty.” ²⁹A jar of wine vinegar was there, so they soaked a sponge in it, put the sponge on a stalk of the hyssop plant, and lifted it to Jesus’ lips. ³⁰When he had received the drink, Jesus said, “It is finished.” With that, he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.



STEWARDSHIP

SESSION 1

Purpose: To encourage women to wisely steward the things entrusted to them by God.

Character Goal: Stewardship is being faithful in managing the things entrusted to you by God.

Biblical Character: Lydia

Scripture Readings: Acts 16:13-34, 40

Discussion Questions:

- Who does the passage point out as one of the women who listened as Paul and his travel companions shared the Gospel with them?
- What does verse 14 tell us about her? Which of these two descriptions is most important? Why? (Her occupation or her faith)
- How do people describe you? What type of woman would you like to be described as? What is one goal you can set in order to become the woman you want to be?
- What did the Lord do for Lydia after she heard Paul's message? What does this tell us about God and the work of salvation in our lives?
- What message can we assume that Lydia heard from God? Have you responded to this message? If so, how has your life changed as a result?
- After hearing and believing in the Gospel, Lydia responds to the message in what two ways?
- Lydia was a businesswoman, head of her household, and most importantly a believer in Jesus Christ. In what ways do we see her stewarding these aspects of her life for God's glory?
- Lydia is a great example of how the Gospel motivates us to be good stewards of the resources God has given us. God has given you the ability to play your sport. How can you steward this ability to serve others and bring Him glory?
- What happened as Paul and Silas were on their way to pray? How did Paul respond to the female slave possessed by the evil spirit?
- How did her owners respond? How were Paul and Silas treated by the authorities and the crowd? Where did they end up?
- What were Paul and Silas doing at midnight? Who was listening to them? What do you think they thought about these two men?
- What miracle happened in the jail as they praised God? Who witnessed this miracle?
- How did the jailer respond to this miracle and the message that Paul and Silas gave him?
- What did Paul and Silas choose to do in the midst of their suffering?
- Paul and Silas were entrusted with a trial and used their time in prison to glorify God. As a result of their faithfulness, even in the midst of hardship, God saved a jailer and his whole household. What does this teach us about the trials and hardships God allows in our lives and how our response to them can influence others? How can we steward hardships well?
- Whose house does Paul and Silas return to after they get out of prison? What took place among the believers in her home?
- As a female athlete, what are some difficulties you have faced or are currently facing? How can you steward the things God has entrusted to you and use them for His glory in the midst of your circumstances?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ God desires for us to express the love we have received from Him towards others.
- ▶ The relationships, position, resources, and character traits we have been given are not for us but are to be used freely for the advancement of His kingdom.
- ▶ Faithfulness to God during times of difficulty can result in the salvation of others.

Training for Godliness

Athletes often get confused about their identity. They begin to evaluate their success as a person based on their success (or failure) as an athlete. They mistakenly equate “what they do” (point guard, golfer, center, pitcher, etc.) with “who they are” (God’s creation who is loved, forgiven, and cherished). Lydia sold purple cloth in her city but most importantly she was a follower of Christ—that is WHO she was. Do you struggle with finding your identity in your sport? What are some ways you can remember who you are in Christ vs. what you do on the court or field? How can you use what you have been given and steward that to be who you are in Christ?

Memory Verse: *“She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies sashes for the merchants.”*
Proverbs 31:25

Lydia’s Conversion in Philippi

¹³On the Sabbath we went outside the city gate to the river, where we expected to find a place of prayer. We sat down and began to speak to the women who had gathered there. ¹⁴One of those listening was a woman from the city of Thyatira named Lydia, a dealer in purple cloth. She was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to respond to Paul’s message. ¹⁵When she and the members of her household were baptized, she invited us to her home. “If you consider me a believer in the Lord,” she said, “come and stay at my house.” And she persuaded us.

Paul and Silas in Prison

¹⁶Once when we were going to the place of prayer, we were met by a female slave who had a spirit by which she predicted the future. She earned a great deal of money for her owners by fortune-telling. ¹⁷She followed Paul and the rest of us, shouting, “These men are servants of the Most High God, who are telling you the way to be saved.” ¹⁸She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!” At that moment the spirit left her.

¹⁹When her owners realized that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace to face the authorities. ²⁰They brought them before the magistrates and said, “These men are Jews, and are throwing our city into an uproar ²¹by advocating customs unlawful for us Romans to accept or practice.”

²²The crowd joined in the attack against Paul and Silas, and the magistrates ordered them to be stripped and beaten with rods. ²³After they had been severely flogged, they were thrown into prison, and the jailer was commanded to guard them carefully. ²⁴When he received these orders, he put them in the inner cell and fastened their feet in the stocks.

²⁵About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. ²⁶Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone’s chains came loose. ²⁷The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped. ²⁸But Paul shouted, “Don’t harm yourself! We are all here!”

²⁹The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas. ³⁰He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”

³¹They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.” ³²Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house. ³³At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized.

³⁴The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.

⁴⁰After Paul and Silas came out of the prison, they went to Lydia’s house, where they met with the brothers and sisters and encouraged them. Then they left.



DIGNITY

SESSION 2

Purpose: To encourage women to value themselves as God values them.

Character Goal: Dignity is the state or quality of being worthy of honor, respect, and value in the sight of God.

Biblical Character: Hagar

Scripture Readings: Genesis 16:1-11, 13-16

Discussion Questions:

- Who was Hagar? What did both Abram and Sarai refer to her as?
- What did Sarai want to use her for? What does this tell us about Sarai's view of Hagar and her worth?
- Did the actions of Abram and Sarai dignify Hagar or demean her? Give examples.
- Did Abram listen to Sarai's plan? What happened?
- How did Hagar feel towards Sarai after realizing she was pregnant?
- What did Hagar do in response to Sarai's mistreatment of her? Describe how you think Hagar might have felt.
- Who found Hagar at her lowest point? Was she looking for Him? What does this tell us about God?
- What was the first word the Angel of the Lord said when speaking to her? What does this tell us about God and how He views us?
- What did the Angel of the Lord ask Hagar? Do you think He already knew the answers to His questions? If so, why do you think He asked?
- How did Hagar respond to Him?
- What did He tell her to do? Why do you think He wanted her to do this?
- What did the Angel of the Lord tell Hagar concerning her future? What do you think this did for her?
- Who named her son? What is the meaning of this name? How do you think this name and its meaning would comfort her in the future? What does this tell us about how God cares for us?
- What name did Hagar give to God? Why?
- Based on Abram and Sarai's actions, how did they view Hagar? Based on God's actions, how do you think God viewed Hagar?
- Should God's or others' views of us define our dignity? Why? As a female athlete, how can the knowledge of God and knowing how He views you impact the way you live? How you treat your teammates?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ Even though others may see us as something to be used, God sees us as a person of great value.
- ▶ God's view of us should be what defines our worth.
- ▶ God hears the prayers of and is near to the broken-hearted.

Training for Godliness

Have you ever felt "used" by a coach or teammate to accomplish what they wanted—a statistic, championship, popularity, etc? How did that affect you and the way you played? How can you, like Hagar, change your attitude even if you can't change your circumstances? Looking in Scripture to see whom God sees us to be—blessed, forgiven, dearly loved. This will help give us a right understanding regarding ourselves, regardless of our circumstances.

Memory Verse: *"She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come."*
Proverbs 31:25

Hagar

Now Sarai, Abram's wife, had borne him no children. But she had an Egyptian slave named Hagar; ²so she said to Abram, "The Lord has kept me from having children. Go, sleep with my slave; perhaps I can build a family through her."

Abram agreed to what Sarai said. ³So after Abram had been living in Canaan ten years, Sarai his wife took her Egyptian slave Hagar and gave her to her husband to be his wife. ⁴He slept with Hagar, and she conceived.

When she knew she was pregnant, she began to despise her mistress. ⁵Then Sarai said to Abram, "You are responsible for the wrong I am suffering. I put my slave in your arms, and now that she knows she is pregnant, she despises me. May the Lord judge between you and me."

⁶"Your slave is in your hands," Abram said. "Do with her whatever you think best." Then Sarai mistreated Hagar; so she fled from her.

⁷The angel of the Lord found Hagar near a spring in the desert; it was the spring that is beside the road to Shur. ⁸And he said, "Hagar, slave of Sarai, where have you come from, and where are you going?"

"I'm running away from my mistress Sarai," she answered.

⁹Then the angel of the Lord told her, "Go back to your mistress and submit to her." ¹⁰The angel added, "I will increase your descendants so much that they will be too numerous to count."

¹¹The angel of the Lord also said to her:

"You are now pregnant
and you will give birth to a son.
You shall name him Ishmael,
for the Lord has heard of your misery.

¹³She gave this name to the Lord who spoke to her: "You are the God who sees me," for she said, "I have now seen the One who sees me." ¹⁵So Hagar bore Abram a son, and Abram gave the name Ishmael to the son she had borne. ¹⁶Abram was eighty-six years old when Hagar bore him Ishmael.



WISDOM

SESSION 3

Purpose: To encourage women to display God's wisdom in their daily life and decisions.

Character Goal: **Wisdom** comes from God and is displayed as knowledge of what is true or right coupled with good judgment used in action.

Biblical Character: Abigail

Scripture Readings: 1 Samuel 25:1-19, 23-42

Discussion Questions:

- How is Nabal described? How is Abigail described?
- David requested that Nabal provide food for him and his men in exchange for the protection they had provided Nabal's servants. What was Nabal's response to David's request?
- What did David decide to do about how Nabal treated him? Is this the right response? Why or why not?
- Describe a situation where a friend, teammate, or relative has mistreated you. What would be an unwise response to that situation? What would be a wise response? What would be the result or outcome of each of those responses? See Proverbs 15:1.
- What did the servant tell Abigail? What did she decide to do?
- How did her reaction to the situation display wisdom?
- Describe how Abigail approached and spoke to David.
- What truths did Abigail remind David of concerning God and himself? What does this tell us that Abigail believed about God?
- How did David respond to her wisdom? How do you think this impacted David's future as king over Israel?
- As a female student-athlete, what decisions do you face on a daily basis? How can you make wise decisions that would positively impact your future?
- Who did David acknowledge as being behind Abigail's actions? What does this teach us about God?
- What did David do after he heard of Nabal's death? Why do you think he wanted to marry her? What does this tell us about being a woman of wisdom?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ True wisdom comes from God and knowing His Word, and is displayed in good judgment.
- ▶ People's lives are positively affected by godly wisdom.
- ▶ Wisdom is a valuable trait and women who possess it can add value to others.

Training for Godliness

It is easy to get caught up in a winning streak, strong individual stats, a starting position, or a championship. Often when we are successful, we begin to take pride in ourselves to the degree to which we act haughty, mean, and look down on others. How can you as an athlete and leader at your school display the memory verse this week?

Memory Verse: "She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue." Proverbs 31:26

David, Nabal, and Abigail

...David moved down into the Desert of Paran. ²A certain man in Maon, who had property there at Carmel, was very wealthy... ³His name was Nabal and his wife's name was Abigail. She was an intelligent and beautiful woman, but her husband was surly and mean in his dealings—he was a Calebite. ⁴While David was in the wilderness, he heard that Nabal was shearing sheep. ⁵So he sent ten young men and said to them, "Go up to Nabal at Carmel and greet him in my name. ⁶Say to him: ... ⁷"Now I hear that it is sheep-shearing time. When your shepherds were with us, we did not mistreat them, and the whole time they were at Carmel nothing of theirs was missing. ⁸Ask your own servants and they will tell you. Therefore be favorable toward my men..." ⁹When David's men arrived, they gave Nabal this message in David's name. Then they waited.

¹⁰Nabal answered David's servants, "Who is this David? Who is this son of Jesse? Many servants are breaking away from their masters these days. ¹¹Why should I take my bread and water, and the meat I have slaughtered for my shearers, and give it to men coming from who knows where?" ¹²David's men turned around and went back. When they arrived, they reported every word. ¹³David said to his men, "Each of you strap on your sword!" So they did, and David strapped his on as well...

¹⁴One of the servants told Abigail, Nabal's wife, "David sent messengers from the wilderness to give our master his greetings, but he hurled insults at them. ¹⁵Yet these men were very good to us. They did not mistreat us, and the whole time we were out in the fields near them nothing was missing. ¹⁶Night and day they were a wall around us the whole time we were herding our sheep near them. ¹⁷Now think it over and see what you can do, because disaster is hanging over our master and his whole household. He is such a wicked man that no one can talk to him."

¹⁸Abigail acted quickly. She took two hundred loaves of bread, two skins of wine, five dressed sheep, five seahs of roasted grain, a hundred cakes of raisins and two hundred cakes of pressed figs, and loaded them on donkeys. ¹⁹Then she told her servants, "Go on ahead; I'll follow you." But she did not tell her husband Nabal.

²³When Abigail saw David, she quickly got off her donkey and bowed down before David with her face to the ground. ²⁴She fell at his feet and said: "Pardon your servant, my lord, and let me speak to you; hear what your servant has to say. ²⁵Please pay no attention, my lord, to that wicked man Nabal. He is just like his name—his name means Fool, and folly goes with him. And as for me, your servant, I did not see the men my lord sent. ²⁶And now, my lord, as surely as the Lord your God lives and as you live, since the Lord has kept you from bloodshed and from avenging yourself with your own hands, may your enemies and all who are intent on harming my lord be like Nabal. ²⁷And let this gift, which your servant has brought to my lord, be given to the men who follow you.

²⁸"Please forgive your servant's presumption. The Lord your God will certainly make a lasting dynasty for my lord, because you fight the Lord's battles, and no wrongdoing will be found in you as long as you live. ²⁹Even though someone is pursuing you to take your life, the life of my lord will be bound securely in the bundle of the living by the Lord your God, but the lives of your enemies he will hurl away as from the pocket of a sling. ³⁰When the Lord has fulfilled for my lord every good thing he promised concerning him and has appointed him ruler over Israel, ³¹my lord will not have on his conscience the staggering burden of needless bloodshed or of having avenged himself. And when the Lord your God has brought my lord success, remember your servant."

³²David said to Abigail, "Praise be to the Lord, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. ³³May you be blessed for your good judgment and for keeping me from bloodshed this day and from avenging myself with my own hands. ³⁴Otherwise, as surely as the Lord, the God of Israel, lives, who has kept me from harming you, if you had not come quickly to meet me, not one male belonging to Nabal would have been left alive by daybreak."

³⁵Then David accepted from her hand what she had brought him and said, "Go home in peace. I have heard your words and granted your request."

³⁶When Abigail went to Nabal, he was in the house holding a banquet like that of a king. He was in high spirits and very drunk... ³⁷Then in the morning, when Nabal was sober, his wife told him all these things, and his heart failed him and he became like a stone. ³⁸About ten days later, the Lord struck Nabal and he died.

³⁹When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Praise be to the Lord, who has upheld my cause against Nabal for treating me with contempt. He has kept his servant from doing wrong and has brought Nabal's wrongdoing down on his own head."

Then David sent word to Abigail, asking her to become his wife. ⁴⁰His servants went to Carmel and said to Abigail, "David has sent us to you to take you to become his wife." ⁴¹She bowed down with her face to the ground and said, "I am your servant and am ready to serve you and wash the feet of my lord's servants." ⁴²Abigail quickly got on a donkey and, attended by her five female servants, went with David's messengers and became his wife.



ATTENTIVENESS

SESSION 4

Purpose: To encourage women to consider others needs before their own.

Character Goal: **Attentiveness** is being aware of others and their needs in order to serve them in a way that brings God glory.

Biblical Character: The Servant Girl

Scripture Readings: 2 Kings 5: 1-15

Discussion Questions:

- Who is Naaman and how is he described?
- What do we know about the servant girl from this passage?
- What did she suggest to Naaman's wife? What does this tell us about her faith in God?
- Considering her role as a servant and the high position of her mistress, do you think she might have been hesitant or intimidated of telling Naaman's wife how her husband could be healed? What do you think helped her move beyond her fears or doubts?
- As an athlete or a friend, have you been in an intimidating situation where you knew something that could help someone else but were afraid to say anything? What happened?
- The slave girl was taken captive against her will and put in a situation that wasn't ideal, but she still had concern for the needs around her. Hard circumstances often cause us to focus on our own needs rather than the needs of others. What circumstances has God allowed you to be in, and how can you be attentive to those around you in order that they may experience God in their lives?
- Because of the servant girl's faith in God, she was able to impact another family for eternity. How can your faith and attentiveness to your teammates' needs impact them spiritually?
- What did Naaman decide to do?
- When he arrived at Elisha's house, what did the messenger say to him?
- Why did Naaman become angry?
- How did Naaman's attendants encourage him?
- What happened to Naaman's body after he did what Elisha had told him? What does this teach us about faith and obedience?
- What did he proclaim when he returned to the prophet's house?
- How do you usually react when being told to do something to improve your skills or fitness? What can you learn from this story that would encourage you to take the advice of someone wanting to help you?
- Naaman's life was transformed as a result of the miracle that God performed in his body. Who played a vital role in this valiant soldier's life?
- The servant girl is only mentioned in one sentence in all of Scripture, but because of her faithfulness to be attentive to those around her, she had a huge impact for the glory of God. What does this tell us about the responsibility we have as believers to be attentive to the spiritual and physical needs of those around us and how it can impact God's kingdom?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ We are to share with others what we know to be true about God.
- ▶ Our faith in God greatly impacts the lives of others.
- ▶ In order to be attentive to the needs of others, we must be intentional to serve them in a way that brings glory to God.

Training for Godliness

As athletes, it is easy for us to get wrapped up in our own needs. It is easy to think only about MY training, MY statistics, MY position, MY plan, MY reputation—but what about the rest of the team? How can you improve team dynamics, cohesion, and maybe even records by not just thinking of yourself but noticing other's needs and helping to meet some of those? You can't be everything for every person, but Andy Stanley, American pastor and teacher, has said, "Do for one what you wish you could do for everyone." Start small, focus on just one teammate and watch God work! Report back to the group at the next FCA meeting and tell others how you helped one person who you noticed had a need. By acting on your faith, you will be like the little servant girl who had the courage to tell the family how great God is!

Memory Verse: "She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness." Proverbs 31:27

Naaman Healed of Leprosy

Now Naaman was commander of the army of the king of Aram. He was a great man in the sight of his master and highly regarded, because through him the Lord had given victory to Aram. He was a valiant soldier, but he had leprosy.

²Now bands of raiders from Aram had gone out and had taken captive a young girl from Israel, and she served Naaman's wife. ³She said to her mistress, "If only my master would see the prophet who is in Samaria! He would cure him of his leprosy."

⁴Naaman went to his master and told him what the girl from Israel had said. ⁵"By all means, go," the king of Aram replied. "I will send a letter to the king of Israel." So Naaman left, taking with him ten talents of silver, six thousand shekels of gold and ten sets of clothing. ⁶The letter that he took to the king of Israel read: "With this letter I am sending my servant Naaman to you so that you may cure him of his leprosy."

⁷As soon as the king of Israel read the letter, he tore his robes and said, "Am I God? Can I kill and bring back to life? Why does this fellow send someone to me to be cured of his leprosy? See how he is trying to pick a quarrel with me!"

⁸When Elisha the man of God heard that the king of Israel had torn his robes, he sent him this message: "Why have you torn your robes? Have the man come to me and he will know that there is a prophet in Israel." ⁹So Naaman went with his horses and chariots and stopped at the door of Elisha's house. ¹⁰Elisha sent a messenger to say to him, "Go, wash yourself seven times in the Jordan, and your flesh will be restored and you will be cleansed."

¹¹But Naaman went away angry and said, "I thought that he would surely come out to me and stand and call on the name of the Lord his God, wave his hand over the spot and cure me of my leprosy.

¹²Are not Abana and Pharpar, the rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? Couldn't I wash in them and be cleansed?" So he turned and went off in a rage.

¹³Naaman's servants went to him and said, "My father, if the prophet had told you to do some great thing, would you not have done it? How much more, then, when he tells you, 'Wash and be cleansed'!" ¹⁴So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, as the man of God had told him, and his flesh was restored and became clean like that of a young boy.

¹⁵Then Naaman and all his attendants went back to the man of God. He stood before him and said, "Now I know that there is no God in all the world except in Israel. So please accept a gift from your servant."



LEGACY

SESSION 5

Purpose: To encourage women to leave an impact on others that will far outlive their own life.

Character Goal: Legacy is a godly influence and impact that is passed on to future generations.

Biblical Character: Eunice and Lois

Scripture Readings: Acts 16:1-5; 2 Timothy 1:1-5; 3:10-15

Discussion Questions:

Acts 16:1-5

- Who was Timothy and what do we know about his mother and father?
- What was Timothy's reputation among the other believers in Lystra and Iconium?
- What was Paul's desire for Timothy?
- What did they do as they traveled throughout that area? What happened as a result?

2 Timothy 1:1-5

- What did Paul call Timothy in his letter to him? What does this tell us about their relationship?
- Whose faith did Paul commend? How did he describe their faith? What does this tell us about these particular women's relationships with God?
- According to Paul's statement in verse 4, what kind of impact did their faith have on Timothy? What does this teach us about "sincere" faith and how it can affect future generations?
- As an athlete, you are in a position to leave a lasting legacy on your campus that goes beyond stats. Influencing others for God is a legacy that impacts others for all eternity. Would people be able to describe your faith as being sincere? Why or why not?

2 Timothy 3:10-15

- Paul wrote this last letter to Timothy while imprisoned and awaiting his death. What did Timothy observe in Paul's life during their time together? How do you think this influenced him?
- What did Paul tell Timothy to continue in and why?
- When did Timothy begin to learn the Holy Scriptures? Who can we assume taught him these things? What does this tell us about God's Word as it relates to children?
- Timothy was blessed to have godly influences in his life that spoke to him about Jesus and lived a godly life before him. Do you have godly people in your life? How can you take advantage of these relationships for your own spiritual growth?
- What type of legacy has been left for you—either good or bad?
- What type of legacy do you want to leave for future generations? What steps can you take in order for this to happen?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ We all leave a legacy.
- ▶ Our faith, or lack of faith, in God will determine whether the legacy we leave will be for good or evil.
- ▶ Sincere faith leaves legacies that impact future generations.

Training for Godliness

Legacy is usually thought of as the lasting mark one leaves after their career or life is over. We typically talk about it when a great athlete retires or maybe when someone dies. Just like Timothy's mother and grandmother, passing down a legacy doesn't happen overnight—it is something that takes a lifetime of dedication. Someone can have a legacy of wins, homeruns, points per game, or championships. Others leave a legacy of hurt, haughtiness, or addiction because of the negative way they lived their life. Think ahead—maybe 10 years—what kind of a person do you want to be known for when you are in your 20s? Maybe wise, generous, godly? We don't typically choose addict, liar, vindictive, or manipulative; but yet people live their lives that way every day. Set three goals for your life today: Educational, Athletic, and Spiritual. Write down one way you are going to accomplish them in the next year, five years, ten years. Share some of those with the group so they can encourage you!

Memory Verse: *"Her children arise and call her blessed."* Proverbs 31:28

Acts 16:1-5**Timothy Joins Paul and Silas**

Paul came to Derbe and then to Lystra, where a disciple named Timothy lived, whose mother was Jewish and a believer but whose father was a Greek. ²The believers at Lystra and Iconium spoke well of him. ³Paul wanted to take him along on the journey, so he circumcised him because of the Jews who lived in that area, for they all knew that his father was a Greek. ⁴As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem for the people to obey. ⁵So the churches were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.

2 Timothy 1:1-5**Paul's Letter to Timothy**

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, in keeping with the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

²To Timothy, my dear son:

Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

³I thank God, whom I serve, as my ancestors did, with a clear conscience, as night and day I constantly remember you in my prayers. ⁴Recalling your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. ⁵I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also.

2 Timothy 3:10-15**A Final Charge to Timothy**

¹⁰You, however, know all about my teaching, my way of life, my purpose, faith, patience, love, endurance, ¹¹persecutions, sufferings—what kinds of things happened to me in Antioch, Iconium and Lystra, the persecutions I endured. Yet the Lord rescued me from all of them. ¹²In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.



VALUE

SESSION 6

Purpose: To encourage women to value themselves as God values them.

Character Goal: Value is the recognition of a person's worth, importance, and meaning to God and others.

Biblical Character: Aksah

Scripture Readings: Joshua 14:6-15; Judges 1:1-2, 12-13; Ephesians 5:24b-33

Discussion Questions:

- Describe Caleb and how he followed God.
- What do you think it means to follow God wholeheartedly? Do you know anyone that follows God in this way?
- How did the other men who spied out the land cause the people to feel about the inheritance promised to them?
- What did Moses swear to Caleb and why?
- Describe Caleb at 85 years old. Who was he still confident in 45 years later? How do we know this?
- After God chose the tribe of Judah to go first in taking the land, what challenge did Caleb present to the young men concerning his daughter, Aksah?
- Why do you think Caleb went this route to choose a husband for his daughter, Aksah? What kind of man was he looking for to be her husband?
- Who rose to the challenge to take Kiriath Sepher? How was he related to Caleb? What does this tell you about what his family valued?
- What do Othniel's actions show us about how he might have valued Aksah?
- What are some of the things you value about yourself? About your teammates?
- Caleb was a father that cared deeply about who his daughter would marry. He wanted her to marry someone that trusted God and would lay his life down for her, and he had a plan to weed out those that would not. How do Othniel's actions relate to what Christ did for us on the cross?
- According to the passage in Ephesians 5, how are husbands to love their wives?
- What does this tell us about the kind of husband our Heavenly Father desires for us?
- Who is the Church? What did Christ's sacrifice do for the Church?
- As you consider the guys you have dated or are dating, would they be men God would see as worthy of the value God has placed on you? Why or why not? Do their actions toward you reflect the actions of Christ toward the Church?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ God values us so much that He sacrificed His own Son so that we might be in relationship with Him.
- ▶ God desires for the man who will be our husband to reflect the worth He has placed on us.
- ▶ Women who trust in the value God places on them influence the way others treat them.

Training for Godliness

Have you ever had a winning streak, breakout season, or back-to-back high scores? Did you begin to think highly of yourself? Your value is not tied up in numbers. Records can be broken, streaks come to an end, but the value God places on your life does not change. Proper self-esteem, or value, is evident in our attitudes and actions towards others. What is your attitude towards others? Do you see the value that ALL people bring or do you believe you are more valuable than anyone else? What are some ways you can properly see yourself in light of who God sees you to be?

Memory Verse: "Her husband also...he praises her." Proverbs 31:28

Joshua 14:6-15 Allotment for Caleb

⁶Now the people of Judah approached Joshua at Gilgal, and Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite said to him, "You know what the Lord said to Moses the man of God at Kadesh Barnea about you and me. ⁷I was forty years old when Moses the servant of the Lord sent me from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land. And I brought him back a report according to my convictions, ⁸but my fellow Israelites who went up with me made the hearts of the people melt in fear. I, however, followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly. ⁹So on that day Moses swore to me, 'The land on which your feet have walked will be your inheritance and that of your children forever, because you have followed the Lord my God wholeheartedly.'

¹⁰"Now then, just as the Lord promised, he has kept me alive for forty-five years since the time he said this to Moses, while Israel moved about in the wilderness. So here I am today, eighty-five years old! ¹¹I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then. ¹²Now give me this hill country that the Lord promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there and their cities were large and fortified, but, the Lord helping me, I will drive them out just as he said."

¹³Then Joshua blessed Caleb son of Jephunneh and gave him Hebron as his inheritance. ¹⁴So Hebron has belonged to Caleb son of Jephunneh the Kenizzite ever since, because he followed the Lord, the God of Israel, wholeheartedly.

Judges 1:1-2, 12-13 Israel Fights the Remaining Canaanites

After the death of Joshua, the Israelites asked the Lord, "Who of us is to go up first to fight against the Canaanites?" ²The Lord answered, "Judah shall go up; I have given the land into their hands."

¹²And Caleb said, "I will give my daughter Aksah in marriage to the man who attacks and captures Kiriath Sepher." ¹³Othniel son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother, took it; so Caleb gave his daughter Aksah to him in marriage.

Ephesians 5:25-33 Husbands; a Picture of Christ

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰for we are members of his body. ³¹"For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." ³²This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.



FAITHFULNESS

SESSION 7

Purpose: To encourage women to be faithful to God in their sport and relationships.

Character Goal: Faithfulness is having or showing true and consistent allegiance or loyalty to God.

Biblical Character: Anna

Scripture Readings: Luke 2:1-7, 21-32, 36-38

Discussion Questions:

- Where did Mary and Joseph go to present Jesus before the Lord?
- Who was Simeon and what was he waiting to see?
- After he took Jesus in his arms, Simeon praised God. What did his words tell us about whom he believed Jesus to be?
- Who else was in the temple courts?
- How does the passage describe her?
- As a single woman, where and how did Anna spend her time? What does this tell us about what she believed about God and her relationship with Him?
- Anna was faithful to prioritize her time growing her relationship with God and advancing His kingdom through prayer. As a single woman, where and how does <Insert your Name> spend her time? What changes do you need to make in order to be consistently growing in your relationship with God and advancing His kingdom?
- Who did Anna also get to see? Why do you think God revealed Jesus to her? What does this tell us about whom God reveals Himself to?
- How did God act on behalf of Simeon and Anna? According to Isaiah 64:4-5, why did God do this? According to the verses in Isaiah, what three things should we be faithful to do in our waiting?
- After Anna had a personal encounter with Jesus, what two things was she faithful to do?
- Anna was one of the first evangelists, sharing the hope of Christ with the people around her. In what ways can you be faithful to share about the hope we have in Jesus with those God has placed in your life, like your teammates, peers and family members?
- Compare Simeon and Anna. What did they have in common?
- What characterizes faithful people? How do the examples of these two people encourage you as you think about living and leading a life marked by faithfulness?
- What kind of woman do you want to be at the age of 84? What can you be faithful to begin today that would put you on the path of becoming that type of woman?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ The way you spend your time directly reflects who or what you are faithful to.
- ▶ God reveals Himself to those who wait for Him, gladly do right, and remember His ways.
- ▶ Faithfulness to God and His kingdom puts us in a place to receive God's blessing in our lives.
- ▶ A life of faithfulness begins with decisions we make today.

Training for Godliness

One of the many great things about sports is that it teaches us things about life outside of sports, such as dedication, self-control, discipline, consistency, and loyalty (or faithfulness) to a particular team. It is clear to see how these character traits translate into growing athletically but what about how they translate into growing us spiritually? Take a minute to discuss each one of the character traits above. (You can also add your own!) What do they look like in an athletic context (i.e. loyalty to my team means I cheer for them over other competitors, do my part to win, and take pride in my school) and in a spiritual context (i.e. I am loyal to Jesus, forsaking all others)? How do these character traits help a team? (That team may be your sports team but could also be God's Team!)

Memory Verse: *"Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all."* Proverbs 31:29

The Birth of Jesus

In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.) ³And everyone went to their own town to register.

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

²¹On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

Jesus Presented in the Temple

²²When the time came for the purification rites required by the Law of Moses, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³(as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), ²⁴and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons."

²⁵Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was on him. ²⁶It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. ²⁷Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, ²⁸Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

²⁹"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised,
you may now dismiss your servant in peace.

³⁰For my eyes have seen your salvation,

³¹which you have prepared in the sight of all nations:

³²a light for revelation to the Gentiles,
and the glory of your people Israel."

³⁶There was also a prophet, Anna, the daughter of Penuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, ³⁷and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. ³⁸Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem.



POWER

SESSION 8

Purpose: To encourage women to use their power of influence for God's glory.

Character Goal: Power is the ability to direct or influence the behavior of others either for evil or for God's glory.

Biblical Character: Jezebel

Scripture Readings: 1 Kings 16:29-33; 21:1-7, 15-25

Discussion Questions:

- How is Ahab described?
- On top of his other sins, whom did Ahab marry?
- After Ahab married Jezebel, what did he begin to do?
- How is Ahab described before his marriage? After his marriage?
- What does this tell us about how Jezebel used her power to influence Ahab?
- What did Ahab want from Naboth? How did Naboth respond to his request?
- Describe Ahab's response to Naboth's refusal.
- How did Jezebel respond to Ahab's unhappiness?
- As a teammate, how do you respond to another teammate's unhappiness? Do you walk off irritated and angry or encourage them with a hug and a word from the Lord? What is the result of each of these scenarios?
- What do Jezebel's actions tell us about her view of God? Men?
- What does your behavior reflect about your view of God and men?
- What happened to Naboth as a result of Jezebel's plan?
- After she received the news of Naboth's death, what did Jezebel tell Ahab to do?
- What are some character traits seen in Jezebel? What does this tell us about women who have no fear of God?
- Are the traits that Jezebel possessed evident in your own life? Do they show up in your sport? Which ones? How can you repent and glorify God in these areas?
- What was the Lord's message to Ahab and his wife Jezebel? What does this tell us about God?
- What does verse 25 tell us about Ahab and the influence of his wife?
- What does this tell us about the power women have in the lives of others?
- Athletes have a lot of power to influence others. Do you use your power to influence others for God or for selfish gain?
- In what ways can you use your influence as a female athlete for God's glory?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ Women have power to influence others either for evil or for God's glory.
- ▶ People who live without any fear of God show no restraint in their life or in the way they treat others.
- ▶ Fearing God and being aware of His presences in our lives influences our behavior in positive ways.

Training for Godliness

Athletes are powerful in their influence. Women are powerful in their influence. What does that tell you about a woman who is an athlete? How will you use your power to influence others? What are some tools you can use to make sure you are on the right track and not using your influence for selfish gain or to harm others?

Memory Verse: *“Charm is deceitful and beauty is fleeting; but a woman who fears the Lord is to be praised.”*
Proverbs 31:30

1 Kings 16:29-33**Ahab Becomes King of Israel**

²⁹In the thirty-eighth year of Asa king of Judah, Ahab son of Omri became king of Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel twenty-two years. ³⁰Ahab son of Omri did more evil in the eyes of the LORD than any of those before him. ³¹He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. ³²He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. ³³Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to arouse the anger of the LORD, the God of Israel, than did all the kings of Israel before him.

1 Kings 21:1-7**Naboth’s Vineyard**

Some time later there was an incident involving a vineyard belonging to Naboth the Jezreelite. The vineyard was in Jezreel, close to the palace of Ahab king of Samaria. ²Ahab said to Naboth, “Let me have your vineyard to use for a vegetable garden, since it is close to my palace. In exchange I will give you a better vineyard or, if you prefer, I will pay you whatever it is worth.”

³But Naboth replied, “The LORD forbid that I should give you the inheritance of my ancestors.”

⁴So Ahab went home, sullen and angry because Naboth the Jezreelite had said, “I will not give you the inheritance of my ancestors.” He lay on his bed sulking and refused to eat.

⁵His wife Jezebel came in and asked him, “Why are you so sullen? Why won’t you eat?”

⁶He answered her, “Because I said to Naboth the Jezreelite, ‘Sell me your vineyard; or if you prefer, I will give you another vineyard in its place.’ But he said, ‘I will not give you my vineyard.’”

⁷Jezebel his wife said, “Is this how you act as king over Israel? Get up and eat! Cheer up. I’ll get you the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite.”

1 Kings 21:8-14 Summary: Jezebel successfully devises a plan to have Naboth falsely accused and killed.

1 Kings 21:15-25

¹⁵As soon as Jezebel heard that Naboth had been stoned to death, she said to Ahab, “Get up and take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite that he refused to sell you. He is no longer alive, but dead.” ¹⁶When Ahab heard that Naboth was dead, he got up and went down to take possession of Naboth’s vineyard.

¹⁷Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite: ¹⁸“Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth’s vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. ¹⁹Say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?’ Then say to him, ‘This is what the LORD says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth’s blood, dogs will lick up your blood—yes, yours!’”

²⁰Ahab said to Elijah, “So you have found me, my enemy!”

“I have found you,” he answered, “because you have sold yourself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD. ²¹He says, ‘I am going to bring disaster on you. I will wipe out your descendants and cut off from Ahab every last male in Israel—slave or free. ²²I will make your house like that of Jeroboam son of Nebat and that of Baasha son of Ahijah, because you have aroused my anger and have caused Israel to sin.’

²³“And also concerning Jezebel the LORD says: ‘Dogs will devour Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel.’

²⁴“Dogs will eat those belonging to Ahab who die in the city, and the birds will feed on those who die in the country.”

²⁵(There was never anyone like Ahab, who sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD, urged on by Jezebel his wife).



FAITH

SESSION 9

Purpose: To encourage women to put their faith in God, not in themselves.

Character Goal: Faith is having a confident belief in the truth, value, and trustworthiness of God regardless of our circumstances.

Biblical Character: A Widow

Scripture Readings: 1 Kings 17

Discussion Questions:

- What did Elijah proclaim to Ahab about the rain?
- What did God instruct Elijah to do? How did Elijah respond to these instructions? What does this tell us about Elijah's faith?
- How did God care for Elijah during this time? What does this tell us about God?
- After some time passed, what happened to the brook? What does this tell us about God?
- After the brook dried up, did God stop providing for Elijah?
- As an athlete, friend, sister, daughter, etc., what difficult circumstances do you currently face that give you an opportunity to place your faith in God's provision?
- How did God say He would continue to provide for Elijah?
- Describe the widow's situation.
- What did she assume would happen to them after the meal she was preparing?
- What did Elijah tell the woman to do? What did this require of the woman? What is the one thing that pleases God? (Read Hebrews 11:6)
- How did the woman respond to the Prophet Elijah's instructions? What does this tell us about what she believed about God?
- What happened with the woman's resources? What does this tell us about God? (v. 16)
- What things are the same about God's provision at the brook and God's provision through the widow? What is different?
- What did God require of both Elijah and the woman in order to experience His provision?
- What happened "Some time later..." (v. 17)? How did the first miracle with the oil prepare both Elijah and the widow to experience an even greater miracle in the restoration of life to the boy? What does this tell us about God?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ God requires faith in order that we might experience blessing in our life.
- ▶ Faith and obedience go hand-in-hand.
- ▶ God asks us to trust in Him as provider rather than trusting in what He provides.

Training for Godliness

Did Elijah and the widow put their faith in what God provided (brook, raven, bread) or in God alone? As a female athlete, do you put your faith in the talent you possess or in God who has given that talent to you? What is the difference between putting your faith in your talent and putting your faith in God? God alone. When we put our faith in our own ability, it becomes about us. When we put our faith in God as the one who has provided our talent, we recognize it should be used to glorify Him.

Memory Verse: "Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting, but a woman who fears the Lord, is to be praised." Proverbs 31:30

Elijah Announces a Great Drought

Now Elijah the Tishbite, from Tishbe in Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, whom I serve, there will be neither dew nor rain in the next few years except at my word."

Elijah Fed by Ravens

²Then the word of the LORD came to Elijah: ³"Leave here, turn eastward and hide in the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan. ⁴You will drink from the brook, and I have directed the ravens to supply you with food there."

⁵So he did what the LORD had told him. He went to the Kerith Ravine, east of the Jordan, and stayed there. ⁶The ravens brought him bread and meat in the morning and bread and meat in the evening, and he drank from the brook.

Elijah and the Widow at Zarephath

⁷Some time later the brook dried up because there had been no rain in the land. ⁸Then the word of the LORD came to him: ⁹"Go at once to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and stay there. I have directed a widow there to supply you with food." ¹⁰So he went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, a widow was there gathering sticks. He called to her and asked, "Would you bring me a little water in a jar so I may have a drink?" ¹¹As she was going to get it, he called, "And bring me, please, a piece of bread."

¹²"As surely as the LORD your God lives," she replied, "I don't have any bread—only a handful of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. I am gathering a few sticks to take home and make a meal for myself and my son, that we may eat it—and die."

¹³Elijah said to her, "Don't be afraid. Go home and do as you have said. But first make a small loaf of bread for me from what you have and bring it to me, and then make something for yourself and your son. ¹⁴For this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: 'The jar of flour will not be used up and the jug of oil will not run dry until the day the LORD sends rain on the land.'"

¹⁵She went away and did as Elijah had told her. So there was food every day for Elijah and for the woman and her family. ¹⁶For the jar of flour was not used up and the jug of oil did not run dry, in keeping with the word of the LORD spoken by Elijah.

¹⁷Some time later the son of the woman who owned the house became ill. He grew worse and worse, and finally stopped breathing. ¹⁸She said to Elijah, "What do you have against me, man of God? Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?"

¹⁹"Give me your son," Elijah replied. He took him from her arms, carried him to the upper room where he was staying, and laid him on his bed. ²⁰Then he cried out to the LORD, "LORD my God, have you brought tragedy even on this widow I am staying with, by causing her son to die?" ²¹Then he stretched himself out on the boy three times and cried out to the LORD, "LORD my God, let this boy's life return to him!"

²²The LORD heard Elijah's cry, and the boy's life returned to him, and he lived. ²³Elijah picked up the child and carried him down from the room into the house. He gave him to his mother and said, "Look, your son is alive!"

²⁴Then the woman said to Elijah, "Now I know that you are a man of God and that the word of the LORD from your mouth is the truth."



FRUITFULNESS

SESSION 10

Purpose: To encourage women to glorify God by bearing fruit in union with Christ.

Character Goal: **Fruitfulness** is a result of remaining in Jesus, receiving nourishment from Him, and expressing His nature through our lives towards others.

Biblical Character: The Bride of Christ

Scripture Readings: John 15:1-15; Galatians 5:22-23; 6:7-9

Discussion Questions:

- What is a vine and how does it relate to the branches?
- In this passage, what does Jesus refer to Himself as? What does this imply about other vines?
- Who is the Father and what is His role?
- Who are the branches?
- What does Jesus command His followers to do in verse 4? What does this mean for our life?
- What is the only way that a believer is able to bear fruit?
- What is the significance of God's Word in the life of a believer according to verse 7? In what ways can we allow God's Word to remain in us?
- How is the Father glorified by His people and what does this show about them?
- Read Galatians 6:7-9. What does a man reap (harvest)? In what two areas of our lives do we have the ability to sow? What is the result of each?
- From the verse in Galatians 5, what type of fruit comes as a result of sowing into the Spirit? What is the opposite of each of these kinds of fruit?
- What are some specific seeds we plant that bring about destructive attitudes and behavior? What are some specific seeds we plant to bring about Godly attitudes and behaviors?
- What types of seeds have you been sowing on your team and what has been the result?
- Where does Jesus tell us to remain, and how are we to do that?
- What kind of fruit did Jesus appoint us to bear?
- What are examples of fruit that lasts and what are examples of fruit that does not last?
- What does this tell us about what we are to be investing our time in?
- What does this story teach you about God? Women? How can you apply these truths to your life?
- What is one thing I learned from this story that I can apply to my life before the next lesson?

Core Truths:

- ▶ Jesus is the true vine and our only source of life.
- ▶ Abiding in Jesus allows us to be fruitful, but apart from Jesus we cannot bear fruit that lasts.
- ▶ We reap the fruit of the seeds that we sow—either of the flesh or of the Spirit.
- ▶ Sowing seeds to the flesh reaps destruction and sowing seeds to the Spirit reaps eternal life.

Training for Godliness

Team cohesion is very important. If even one teammate is putting herself above the rest, it disrupts the whole team. BUT, if each team member realizes they have an important role to play—all the way from the starter to the one encouraging others on the bench—the team comes together to accomplish greater things than all the individuals can accomplish alone. Have you ever experienced a team of a bunch of individuals? What was it like? What about a team with strong cohesion? What was that like? How can you work together with your teammates to be more like the example Jesus gave in John 15 of the Vine and Branches.

Memory Verse: "Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate." Proverbs 31:31

John 15:1-15**The Vine and the Branches**

¹I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. ²He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes so that it will be even more fruitful. ³You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. ⁴Remain in me, as I also remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me.

⁵I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶If you do not remain in me, you are like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. ⁷If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples.

⁹As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. ¹⁰If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. ¹²My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. ¹³Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.

Galatians 5:22-23

²²But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Galatians 6:7-9

⁷Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸Whoever sows to please their flesh, from the flesh will reap destruction; whoever sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. ⁹Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.



REVIEW

Purpose: To encourage girls to continue seeking God through His Word and grow in their relationship with Jesus and their knowledge of Him

Session	Memory Verse	Trait	Character	Personal Application	Team Application
Intro	John 17:4 I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do.	Excellence	Jesus		
1	v. 24: She makes linen garments and sells them, and supplies the merchants with sashes.	Stewardship	Lydia		
2	v. 25: strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come.	Dignity	Hagar		
3	v. 26: She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction is on her tongue.	Wisdom	Abigail		
4	v. 27: She watches over the affairs of her household and does not eat the bread of idleness.	Attentiveness	The Servant Girl		
5	v. 28 Her children arise and call her blessed;	Legacy	Eunice and Lois		
6	Her husband also, and he praises her:	Value	Caleb's Daughter		
7	v. 29: Many women do noble things, but you surpass them all.	Faithfulness	Anna		
8	v. 30: Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting;	Power	Jezebel		
9	But a woman who fears the Lord, is to be praised.	Faith	The Widow		
10	v. 31: Honor her for all that her hands have done, and let her works bring her praise at the city gate.	Fruitfulness	The Bride of Christ		

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