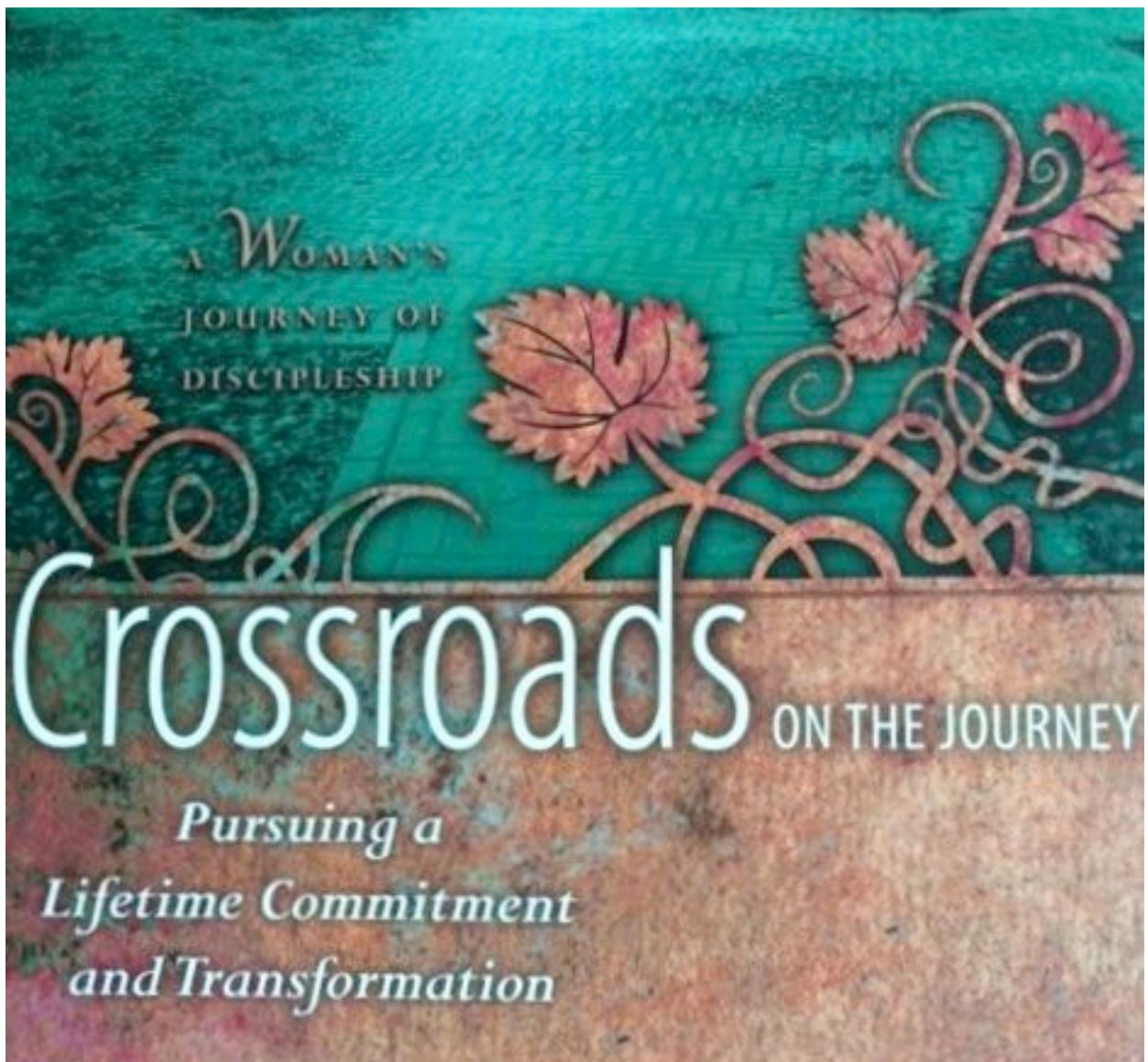


Crossroads
Leadership
Manual



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Focus Tips for Leaders

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Focus Tips for Leaders

Crossroads on the Journey

Focus Tips is a tool to help you, the leader, take other women through *Crossroads on the Journey*. The purpose is to enhance and give direction to the discussion of each session. It is not meant to take away from the discussion questions, but to stimulate thinking and dialogue as you go through each chapter. For additional Guidelines and Essentials on the Journey see Appendix C on pages 135-138.

As you lead your group through *A Woman's Journey of Discipleship*, remind them that this is a process rather than simply a Bible study. This journey with Jesus gives opportunity to wholeheartedly follow him in discipleship as well as to capture his heart and vision for discipling others.

Crossroads extends an invitation in every session for a woman to take new steps and make choices to go deeper within the Bible, the source for making decisions. It is designed to inspire growth in developing spiritual disciplines. It invites a woman to share from her life, interact personally with others, and grow deeper in her relationship with the Lord.

It's important to the process that you as the leader cover each of the seven components (listed below) with your group. This will enable the women to grow in their spiritual journey and help them develop spiritual disciplines, such as scripture memory, quiet time, studying the Bible, and applying God's Word to their lives.

- MY DAILY JOURNEY...sharing highlights from the Word draws the group closer.
- OUR JOURNEY TOGETHER...reviewing lessons learned reinforces the discipling process.
- REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY...helps women relate as they read encouraging stories from ordinary women about their encounters with an extraordinary God.
- THE TRAVEL GUIDE...brings deeper understanding through exploring and experiencing the truth of the Bible.
- TIPS FOR THE ROAD...offers practical help and encouragement.
- LEARNING THE ROUTE BY HEART...changed lives happen through memorizing scripture.
- NEXT STEPS ON THE JOURNEY...enables the women to see progress as they complete each assignment.
- MY JOURNEY FRIENDS...(initiated in the first lesson.) Encouraging one another beyond the group time brings encouragement and accountability.

Focus Tips are written for each of the eight sessions in *Crossroads on the Journey*.

Included are:

1. Key Point/Focus of the Session
2. Overall tips for the Session to emphasize and highlight
 - Background of scripture where relevant
 - Questions to choose to enhance discussion
3. Take away (application) from the Session

Starting each session:

Here are some suggestions to help you start each session of *Crossroads on the Journey*.

Open with prayer

Included in each lesson is the scripture memory component, *Learning the Route by Heart*. The tear-out memory verses are in the back of the book. At the beginning of each session review the scripture memory verse either by pairing up with someone or by reviewing it as a group. You can be creative and vary how you review the verses.

Another important part of the lesson is *My Daily Journey*. The introduction to *My Daily Journey* is on page 99, and the reading and journaling begins on page 100. This is an important part of discipleship as it encourages the women to spend daily time with God through His Word and helps form the habit of journaling. During *Our Journey Together* encourage the women to share what they have recorded from one of the five days of *My Daily Journey*. This will help your group get to know one another better, and also learn how God is working in their lives through the scriptures.

We encourage you to pray regularly for your group that their hearts would be ignited to follow Jesus Christ and in turn disciple others, leaving a legacy of spiritual generations.

Crossroads on the Journey

Session 1

Description of the Traveler

“What are the marks of a disciple?”

In preparation for the study take some time to pray over this lesson...the key point and the “take away,” highlighting the questions you think will best communicate to the women in your group.

1. In your group time include ***Our Journey Together***, which is important to the discipling process. It gives opportunity for group members to build community as they share recent highlights from their devotional journals, experience the joy of hiding God’s Word in their hearts through scripture memory, and learn from one another lessons learned on their journey.
2. **Key Point of Session 1:**
 - Identifying the essential characteristics of a disciple and the decisions and steps to take to be transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.
3. **Journey Components:** It’s important to the process that you as the leader cover each of the components included in this session.
 - My Daily Journey
 - Our Journey Together
 - Reflections on the Journey
 - The Travel Guide
 - Tips for the Road
 - Learning the Route by Heart
 - Next Steps on the Journey
 - My Journey Friends
4. **Overall Tips for the Session to Emphasize and Highlight:**
 - A. To give the women a picture of what to expect in the ***Crossroads on the Journey*** process, take turns reading the introduction (pages 9-12).
 - B. From ***Reflections on the Journey*** (pages 14 -15), ask: What was the secret of Wendy’s heart desire to naturally disciple and invest her life in other women?
 - C. From the chart on page 18, ask these two questions:
 - What do you see about Jesus’ heart as he modeled discipleship?
 - What qualifications of a disciple did you discover, and which do you respond to?
 - D. From Questions 3 and 4 on page 19, ask:
 - After describing your own definition of a disciple, what are some things you’ve had to leave behind to follow Christ?
 - E. From Question 6 on page 19, ask these two questions:
 - What are some differences between cultured grapevines and wild grapevines?
 - How can this compare to your relationship with Jesus?
 - F. From Question 12 on page 20, ask the group members to share both a cost and a benefit that stood out to them from having experienced God’s discipline.
5. **Take Away/Application) from this Session:**
 - Ask each woman describe some disciplines she will pursue on her journey as a disciple. Identify some steps to take in order to ensure growth in these areas.
 - Read ***Tips for the Road*** to help identify some next steps to take.

Following the Guidebook

“How can the Bible help me on my Journey?”

In preparation for the study take some time to pray over this lesson...the key point and the “take away,” highlighting the questions you think will best communicate to the women in your group.

1. In your group time include ***Our Journey Together***, which is important to the discipling process. It gives opportunity for group members to build community as they share recent highlights from their devotional journals, experience the joy of hiding God's Word in their hearts through scripture memory, and learn from one another lessons learned on their journey.
2. **Key Point of Session 2:**
 - Growing strong spiritual roots through application and understanding God's Word.
3. **Overall Tips for the Session to Emphasize and Highlight**
 - A. From ***Reflections on the Journey*** (pages 26-29), try to identify with Bill and Sandy. Ask how spending time in God's Word helped them get through this huge crisis?
 - B. Read together the two paragraphs on page 30 that describe how God's Word transforms our lives.
 - C. As you go over ***The Hand Illustration***TM on page 31, have each person demonstrate her grip by holding her Bible with the fingers indicated. Discuss the value of each method, giving special attention to meditation and memorizing God's Word.
 - Emphasize with your group how the value of retaining God's Word brings a passion and intimacy with Jesus and a heart to disciple others.
 - D. As you discuss the scriptures that correspond to ***The Hand Illustration***TM ask: How would you summarize your intake of God's Word? Suggest these ideas:
 - Reflect on, ponder, and study the passage.
 - Identify key words and thoughts in the scripture.
 - Pray, asking the Holy Spirit to speak to you through the verse or passage.
 - Ask: What application will I take away from meditating on this verse or passage?
 - E. Vulnerability with one another helps bring the group together. As a leader, be the first to share with the group some choices you have made to overcome past hindrances in your life that could have kept you from moving forward in your walk with Jesus.
 - F. From Question 6.b., ask someone to explain her understanding of “prospering” and “success” and how the Bible describes it.
 - G. From Question 7., ask the group members what verse they chose that speaks to their hearts most clearly.
 - H. Question 13: Pass a mirror around for everyone to look at their faces. Discuss one important way in which you want your image to reflect Jesus.
4. **Take Away/Application from This Session**
 - Ask for volunteers to share one new way they will apply God's Word to their lives.

Follow Me

“How Can I persevere for the long haul?”

In preparation for the study take some time to pray over this lesson...the key point and the “take away,” highlighting the questions you think will best communicate to the women in your group.

1. In your group time include ***Our Journey Together***, which is important to the discipling process. It gives opportunity for group members to build community as they share recent highlights from their devotional journals, experience the joy of hiding God's Word in their hearts through scripture memory, and learn from one another lessons learned on their journey.
2. **Key Point of Session 3:**
 - Choosing to persevere in following Christ comes with a cost, but brings spiritual maturity.
3. **Overall Tips for the Session to Emphasize and Highlight:**
 - A. The theme for this session is perseverance. To persevere means: "Continuing to do something in spite of difficulties...firm adherence to some purpose...persistence."
 - As you go through this session, together identify and think about other words that describe the ways in which people persevered to follow Christ in their daily walk with Him.
 - B. Roadblocks are common throughout our lives. We're constantly faced with important decisions about how we will respond to these roadblocks. Some common roadblocks are listed on page 42 in the introduction to ***The Travel Guide***. As you discuss question 3, encourage the group to share some roadblocks they have encountered and what choices they made to overcome them.
 - C. From Questions 5 & 6: With the fear of being persecuted like Peter, discuss with the group ways they think they might have responded. Have them share what would motivate them to speak up for Jesus.
 - D. From Question 7: In ***Reflections on the Journey*** Ashley's chose to be bold and persevere in her Christian faith. Reflecting on her story, ask the group to share what they can learn from her perseverance.
 - E. The chart on page 45 gives biblical examples of the costs and the benefits of following Christ. Ask for examples from the women about how scripture has been relevant in their lives as they persevere in their walks with Christ.
 - F. Encourage the group members to read page 47, fill out the pie chart on page 46, and then come prepared to discuss their pie charts during ***Our Journey Together*** in Session 4. This will not only help them identify how they use their time, but will also give them opportunity to evaluate when and how they can carve out time to spend with Jesus.
4. **Take Away/Application for This Session**
 - To identify an area where perseverance is needed in walking with Jesus.

Crossroads on the Journey

Session 4

Demonstrating a Transformed Life

“Where am I on my spiritual Journey?”

In preparation for the study take some time to pray over this lesson...the key point and the “take away,” highlighting the questions you think will best communicate to the women in your group.

1. In your group time include ***Our Journey Together***, which is important to the discipling process. It gives opportunity for group members to build community as they share recent highlights from their devotional journals, experience the joy of hiding God's Word in their hearts through scripture memory, and learn from one another lessons learned on their journey.

2. **Key Point of Session 4:**

- Spiritual transformation is a progression of being transformed into Christ-likeness through the power of the Holy Spirit when a believer chooses to put off the old life and follow Christ.

3. **Overall Tips for the Session to Emphasize**

A. Encouraging the group members to write a *Life Purpose Statement*. This intentionality will help bring focus and purposeful objectives for setting life goals. Examples are given on page 30. Below are some tips to pass along to the women in your group:

- In writing a Life Purpose statement, think about your purpose for living and the values God has directed you toward.
- Pray over a meaningful scripture verse that you can claim for your life, and ask God for his wisdom and direction as you write.
- To help get started write a general statement such as: “I will glorify God through holiness, obedience, and service.”
- Then write a specific statement as to how you want to accomplish this purpose.
- Back up your purpose statement with scripture.

B. Read through the story of Amy Carmichael on page 52. As you discuss Jonah 2:8, ask the women to describe how the key words in the passage—“cling”, “worthless”, “idols” and “forfeit”—identify choices they have made that hinder their walk with Jesus.

- Ask someone to share her definition of God’s grace.
- Ask: What is the grace that we have missed out on receiving by clinging to worthless idols?

“Grace is the good pleasure of God that inclines Him to bestow benefits upon the undeserving...the channel through which it (grace) flows out to men is Jesus Christ, crucified and risen.”

(The Knowledge of the Holy, A.W. Tozer)

1. **Take Away From This Session:**

- Using the points in Question 6, **Character, Conduct, Commitment**, and **Contribution**, ask the women to share the steps they will take and choices they will make to have their lives reflect Jesus Christ. *We make the choice to follow Christ, but **He** brings about the spiritual transformation in our lives through the Holy Spirit.*
- Read ***Tips for the Road*** together with a heart to seek God’s direction.

Growing Closer to God Through Prayer

“What do I need to know about talking with God?”

In preparation for the study take some time to pray over this lesson...the key point and the “take away,” highlighting the questions you think will best communicate to the women in your group.

1. In your group time include ***Our Journey Together***, which is important to the discipling process. It gives opportunity for group members to build community as they share recent highlights from their devotional journals, experience the joy of hiding God’s Word in their hearts through scripture memory, and learn from one another lessons learned on their journey.
2. **Key Point of Session 5:**
 - God wants us to talk to Him, and when we do, our conversations with Him draw us into a deeper relationship and a dependence on Him. Praying brings God joy, too, because when we pray, we give glory to Him for who He is and what He has done.
3. **Overall Tips for the Session to Emphasize and Highlight:**
 - A. In ***Reflections on the Journey***, Ann shared how she prayed and what she prayed for. As a group, discuss what she prayed for and the outcome of her prayer. Ask: From Ann’s example, how were you motivated to pray?
 - B. ***The Travel Guide*** gives many godly examples of how Jesus and other biblical men prayed. Encourage the women to adopt these patterns of prayer as their own.
Additional questions to ask about prayer:
 - How do you see prayer as a spiritual discipline?
 - What does God do in your heart as you pray?
 - How have you experienced drawing closer to God through prayer?
 - C. From Questions 1 and 2, share observations about the way Jesus modeled prayer.
 - Ask: In John 17: 20, when Jesus prayed for others, who was included in His prayers?
 - D. From Question 6, ask: In what ways was prayer an important part of Nehemiah’s leadership?
 - Look at *The Prayer Hand*TM illustration together, and ask: Which part of the hand should always be a focus of your prayer life? Why?
4. **Take Away from This Session:**
 - To commit to a focused prayer time with God, using *The Prayer Hand*TM as a guide.
 - Encourage the group members to begin a prayer journal. ***Tips for the Road*** will help them get started.

Crossroads on the Journey

Session 6

Depending on the Holy Spirit

“How can I rely on God’s spirit to guide me?”

In preparation for the study take some time to pray over this lesson...the key point and the “take away,” highlighting the questions you think will best communicate to the women in your group.

1. In your group time include ***Our Journey Together***, which is important to the discipling process. It gives opportunity for group members to build community as they share recent highlights from their devotional journals, experience the joy of hiding God's Word in their hearts through scripture memory, and learn from one another lessons learned on their journey.
2. **Key Point of Session 6:** To better understand the role and importance of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer.
3. **Overall Tips for the Session to Emphasize and Highlight**
 - A. Together read the introduction to ***The Travel Guide*** on page 72. It gives a clear definition of the importance of the Holy Spirit and how transformation happens in our lives through Him.
 - B. From Kristin’s story in ***Reflections on the Journey***, Ask: What were some significant ways Kristin relied on the Holy Spirit? Give opportunity for several to share their story of how they relied on the Holy Spirit during a transitional time.
 - C. Listed below are some truths about the Holy Spirit to help with discussion.
Questions to include in your group time:
 - What three things needed to happen for the apostles to understand about Jesus and His mission?
 1. His death had to happen.
 2. He had to rise again.
 3. The Father would send Holy Spirit in Jesus name.
 - What role of salvation does the Holy Spirit have within the life of a believer?
 1. It is the Spirit who brings conviction, causing the unbeliever to see the truth of the gospel.
 2. A believer is marked with the seal of the Holy Spirit.
 3. To live in the power of The Holy Spirit a believer must yield to God and be obedient to His Word. Yielding spiritual fruit is a result of obedience.
 4. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts and abilities.
 - D. Ask the women to share choices they are making in learning to yield to the Holy Spirit.
 - ***Tips for the Road*** has practical application for learning to depend on the Holy Spirit. Review these tips with your group.
4. **Take Away From This Session:**
 - To choose to yield to the Holy Spirit’s guidance through thoughts, words, choices, and actions.

Please Note: A website for taking a free spiritual gifts inventory is given on page 77 in ***Next Steps on the Journey***. Encourage the women to do this inventory and be prepared to share their results at the next meeting.

Designed for God's Glory

"What are my spiritual gifts?"

In preparation for the study take some time to pray over this lesson...the key point and the "take away," highlighting the questions you think will best communicate to the women in your group.

1. In your group time include ***Our Journey Together***, which is important to the discipling process. It gives opportunity for group members to build community as they share recent highlights from their devotional journals, experience the joy of hiding God's Word in their hearts through scripture memory, and learn from one another lessons learned on their journey.
2. **Key Point of Session 7:**
 - Every believer has at least one spiritual gift given by God to be used to build up the body of Christ. (Ephesians 4:11)
3. **Overall Tips for the Session to Emphasize and Highlight:**
 - A. In ***Reflections on the Journey*** Judy tells about people discovering their spiritual gifts and how they enjoy using them. Ask everyone in the group to share what they learned from the gift inventory and to share their top three spiritual gifts.
 - B. For better understanding, here are some truths about spiritual gifts:
 - They were given for God's glory. (I Peter 4:10-11)
 - Every believer has at least one. (Ephesians 1:13-14)
 - There is diversity in the gifts, but unity is the giver, Christ. (I Corinthians 12:4 -6)
 - We are each responsible for how we use our gifts. (I Timothy 4:14)
 - C. Ask the women to tell about some well-known people they think of who have used their gifting in a way that benefits others. For example: Billy Graham, with the gift of evangelism; Chuck Swindoll, with the gift of teaching
 - D. Read through the definitions on pages 81-82 to give you a better understanding of the support and service gifts.
 - E. Here's a little background on 1 Corinthians 14:12, question 5b, on page 84. Because the Corinthians were so preoccupied with un-interpreted tongues that no one could understand, Paul was encouraging them to instead pursue gifts that would benefit all people in the church.
 - F. Go over the chart on page 85, sharing your discoveries with one another. Ask the group how they are using or how they plan to use their spiritual gifts to serve the body of Christ.
4. **Take Away from this Session:**
 - After confirming your spiritual gifts, develop a plan and take steps to use them.

Crossroads on the Journey

Session 8

Inviting Others on the Journey

“How can I be intentional about sharing my faith?”

In preparation for the study take some time to pray over this lesson...the key point and the “take away,” highlighting the questions you think will best communicate to the women in your group.

1. In your group time include *Our Journey Together*, which is important to the discipling process. It gives opportunity for group members to build community as they share recent highlights from their devotional journals, experience the joy of hiding God's Word in their hearts through scripture memory, and learn from one another lessons learned on their journey.
2. **Key Point of Session 8:**
 - Christ commissioned every believer to be an ambassador to pass on to others the good news of the gospel.
3. **Overall Tips for the Session to Emphasize and Highlight:**
 - A. In *Reflections on the Journey*, Rodlyn shared how she used opportunities to share Christ in a natural way. Ask: Why was time an important factor in her relationship with Suzanne?
 - B. Read about Lottie Moon on page 91. She went to China in 1873 because of her heart to share Christ. Ask: What was unique about her ministry, and what principles still work in sharing Christ today?
 - C. As you go through this last session of Crossroads, encourage the women to ask themselves the following questions:
 - Do I have a heart and passion to share Christ with others? If not, what do I need to do to change my heart?
 - As an ambassador for Christ, what should my part be? How is my part significant?
 - How does my life reflect Christ to others?
 - How can I be more prepared to share my story?
 - What verses from this study have stirred my heart to share Christ with others?
 - D. Ask the women to explain the Great Commission from Matthew 28:19-20 (page 92). Why was it given at this time? How was it possible for these few men to reach all nations? From this passage, identify the key principles about sharing Christ.
4. **Take Away from this Session:**
 - As you consider the commands, insights, and challenges in being a light for Christ, what will be your next step in reaching others for Christ?

Congratulations! We hope this journey through *Crossroads* has been an encouragement to you as the leader, and to the women you have led through the second book of this discipleship process.

- Celebrate what God has done in your life and in the lives of the women in your group. Set the date for a special time to celebrate together. Organize a luncheon or dessert party, and have the women come with prepared hearts to share about their journeys with the Lord.
- At the celebration share with one another some significant choices made through this process as well as the greatest blessings received by going through *Crossroads on the Journey* ...in your relationship with the Lord, in your relationships with others, and in your friendships within the group.
- Encourage the women to pray about continuing on in the discipleship process by continuing on through *Friends on the Journey*. This is the final book in the series, which is intended to empower you with God's vision and passion and give you the skills for a lifelong ministry of discipling others, building spiritual generations of disciples.