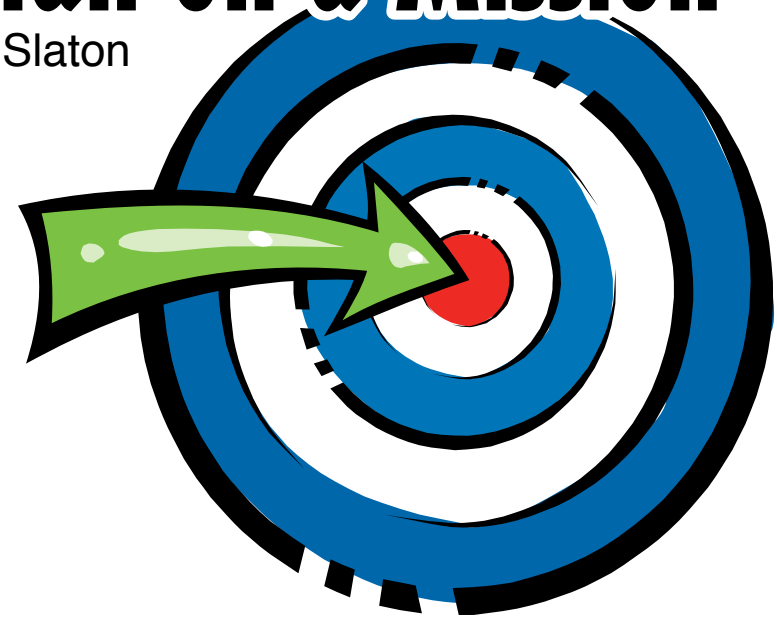
Woman on a Mission

by Linda Slaton



LEADER'S GUIDE

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Introduction:
My Heart For The Class

My purpose in writing *Woman on a Mission* is to empower women to become courageous difference makers by God's design. From scripture we know that God sent His Son to Earth to make an eternal difference in the lives of every person throughout history. And God instructs us to imitate Jesus. With His work on Earth almost completed, Jesus sums up His mission and gives us a model to follow: "I glorified You [Father] on the earth, having accomplished the work You gave Me to do" (John 17:4). To embrace the same eternal perspective, women must **know their mission**—the work they were created to do—and **become engaged in it**.

Like countless other authors who have written on the subject, I believe that to discover your mission you must know who you are. Put another way, mission discovery depends on self discovery. Many women do not know who they are. Moreover, even if women do have a clear understanding of who they are and how God made them, rarely do I find a woman who truly *appreciates* her strengths and what she has to offer the kingdom. To become a woman on a mission, defined as a **courageous difference maker by God's design**, you must have both—a *clear understanding of your unique design* and a *deep appreciation of your usefulness to God's kingdom.* Each one of us is uniquely created to uniquely contribute to God's kingdom. What's more, as we fulfill the mission God created for us, we enjoy what Jesus came to give us: Abundant life.

TWO (OR THREE) LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

1. **Class Director** is the organizing and directional leader. Her role is to:

   - Recruit and train the small group leaders.
   - Conduct the leaders' meeting, which takes place one hour before class begins.
   - Divide participants into small groups, keep updated rosters and outlines, and handle or delegate administrative needs.
   - Provide upbeat music and a warm, inviting environment for the session each week.
   - Enlist volunteers to provide snacks and coffee or drinks each week.
   - Be the go-to girl for any woman with questions or needs.

- Open each class meeting with a welcome, announcements and prayer. Welcoming well requires creativity and a warm, personable demeanor. A brief summary or quick story from the week before, jokes, exhortation or soliciting a "yeah God" story from someone in the audience are all good ways to begin the morning and help the audience to focus on what's ahead.

- Set the presenter up to win. If the presenter will be speaking live, then the director's job is to set a warm and inviting environment before she speaks. If there is no live presenter and you are using Linda Slaton's audio lectures, then the host needs to do more to introduce each session. She needs to give a "commercial" for what is to come so that the women are eager to listen for topics of interest. In this way, the director takes on some of the presenter's role and by that gains credibility with the women in the class. For example: The director may say, "You are in for a treat today! When [the presenter] told me what she's speaking on today, I knew that I needed to be here. She's going to talk today about practical barriers that you may encounter that will keep you from discovering your mission. Let's hear what she has to say now."

2. **The Presenter** is the teacher of each of the sessions if the presentations are done live and you are not listening to Linda Slaton's CDs. She must:

- Be a gifted speaker, comfortable with presenting.

- Be prepared. She should have listened to all 10 of Linda's lectures and completed the 11 lessons of *Woman on a Mission* prior to the first day of class. She may choose to create her own material for her messages or use Linda's lectures as a resource. Sets of the ten Woman on a Mission lectures are available for $35.00 plus shipping. To order call Cross Reference Bookstore at 1.800.446.7228 or contact Linda Slaton at 501.224.7171 or Lslaton@fellowshiponline.com.

  NOTE: Another option is to dispense with the lectures, use the book as your sole resource, and focus on the small group process. Many groups, particularly working women who meet during the lunch hour, have approached the study in this manner and report that they have received great benefit from the material. The study was written to stand alone, without the lectures (except for the lecture for Lesson 3; see note below). However, the inspirational lectures which include personal illustrations and life-change stories do enhance the experience for most participants.

- Become a certified trainer for Servants by Design™ (an online personality assessment that participants will take in Lesson 3) if the presenter desires to teach the assessment herself. Though the women will receive a detailed Profile Report explaining the results of the inventory, I believe they will benefit greatly from the additional information presented in the lecture. To become certified to teach the material, the presenter must attend a Certification Workshop, offered in Little Rock twice a year, in January and July. Go to the website for details, www.servantsbydesign.com, or call Dr. Robert Maris' office at 501.219.2419. If the presenter is not able to take the certification workshop, she must use Linda's lecture for that session to insure compliance with copyright standards for Servants by Design™. To order the single *Woman on a Mission* Servants by Design ™ CD (available October 6, 2008) for $3.00 plus shipping, call Cross Reference Bookstore at 1-800-446-7228.

- Be passionate about the material. Her passion, as well as that of the other leaders, will be contagious.

3. **Facilitators** serve as discussion leaders for the small groups. Their role is extremely important to the success of the class. Roles and responsibilities for facilitators are as follows:

   • **One Role: Love Your Women**

   What I desire to see in a small group facilitator is that special something that says to her women, "I care about you deeply." As you will see in Lesson 4 of *Woman on a Mission*, love and good deeds are inextricably linked throughout scripture. The writer of Hebrews, for example, says, "Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds" (Hebrews 10:24). The specific "good deeds" we hope to see is for each woman to know and pursue her mission, but a key avenue to move her toward that goal is the genuine support of her facilitator. As in the verse in Hebrews, love comes first, then good deeds. It's the kind of caring that says, *"I believe in you. You are useful and necessary to God's purposes. You have something unique to offer that no one else does. Keep on this path until you find what God has for you and I'm here to cheer you on."*

   One class participant made this remark to her small group leader during class, "I don't think that I have ever been in a small group, and I've been in many, where the leader actually wanted to hear what I had to say. They have all been more concerned with saying what *they* wanted to say." She was amazed to find someone who actually cared, someone who showed it by asking good questions borne out of genuine curiosity and then listening intently to her responses. Let that illustration serve as a picture of the ideal facilitator. That said, a facilitator can only do so much; each participant must take personal responsibility for her own efforts and her willingness to hear from God in the process.

   The kind of caring I desire to see is communicated primarily through the responsibilities listed below.

   • **Four Key Responsibilities**

   (1) **Get the women to talk** about themselves using the self-discovery exercises as your guide. To this end, you may need to "prime the pump" by vulnerably sharing parts of your own journey toward life change and mission.

   (2) **Listen compassionately** to their responses, which will prompt you to . . .

   (3) **Ask follow-up questions** to deepen their self-awareness.

   (4) **Affirm** their insights, questions, and every "win."

AVOID COMMON PITFALLS

Bible Study vs Self-Discovery: Notice in the list above that I did not mention as a key responsibility for you to share your own Bible knowledge or focus on the Bible study questions. The "meat of the matter" is more about self-discovery than about Bible study per se.

Listening vs Advising: The best facilitators are good listeners and questioners and avoid giving advice. Advice-giving short circuits the process that women must go through to find their own answers. The facilitator's job is not to give solutions but to create an environment where her women can talk freely, grapple with their issues, and listen to God. When women come to their own solutions, there is great buy-in and a greater likelihood that they will take action. Listen deeply; don't advise.

STRUCTURE FOR *WOMAN ON A MISSION*

Every leader of *Woman on a Mission* should choose the format and structure that works best for her unique situation. At Fellowship we set aside two and a half hours for the morning class and two hours and 15 minutes for the evening class. Prior to each class, we have leaders' meeting to discuss the lesson and any concerns the leaders may have concerning their women.

MORNING CLASS

8:00 – 9:00: Leaders' Meeting

9:00 – 9:10: Greet, Coffee and Snacks* with Music

9:10- 9:15: Welcome, Announcements and Prayer

9:15 – 10:00: Lecture

10:00 – 11:30: Small Groups

EVENING CLASS

5:15 – 6:15: Leaders' Meeting

6:15 – 6:25: Greet, Drinks and Snacks* with Music

6:25 – 6:30: Welcome, Announcements and Prayer

6:30 to 7:20: Lecture

7:20 – 8:30: Small Groups

*Snacks:
We schedule one small group or two or three women to bring snacks each week. Drinks are provided by the church or hostess (if meeting in the home).

You may ask: *Why is the night class shorter than the day class?*

Most of the women in the night class are working women and they are tired at the end of the day. Expecting them to go beyond the "bewitching hour" of 8:30 is oftentimes simply asking too much. Our night class begins at 6:15 sharp and ends at 8:30. If you desire to add an additional 15 minutes, I suggest you add it on the front end.

Ideal Small Group Size: Six to seven members, including the facilitator. Each member needs the opportunity to process her journey *out loud*, in the presence of interested, caring others. If the groups are larger, we've found there simply is not enough time to allow for this kind of sharing.

The class schedule below that we use at Fellowship Bible Church (fall, 2008) may serve as an example of a typical fall semester.

DATE	WEEK	LECTURE	HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENT
Sept. 10	Introduction	Vision Casting	Lesson 1
Sept. 17	Lesson 1	Lecture	Lesson 2
Sept. 24	Lesson 2	Lecture	Lesson 3
Oct. 1	Lesson 3	Serv. by Design	Lesson 4
Oct. 8	Lesson 4	Lecture	Lesson 5
Oct. 15	Lesson 5	Lecture	Lesson 6
Oct. 22	Lesson 6	Lecture	Lesson 7
Oct. 29	Lesson 7	Lecture	Lesson 8
Nov. 5	Lesson 8	Lecture + Guest Speaker*	Lesson 9
Nov. 12	Lesson 9	Lecture + Guest Speaker*	Lesson 10
Nov. 19	Lesson 10	Guest Speakers (3-5)	Lesson 11
Nov. 26	Thanksgiving – No Class		
Dec. 3	Lesson 11	Celebrating in Small Groups	Finish Assignments
Dec. 10	Celebration Brunch/Dinner**		Take Courageous Action

* An important component for our classes in Little Rock has been the addition of guest speakers during the last few class meetings. To allow time for them to share during the large group meeting for Lesson 8 and 9, the lectures are shorter in length. Two types of guests are invited to speak. (1) Graduates of *Woman on a Mission* share how they discovered and are now pursuing their missions. Their stories serve as powerful examples to the women and also encourage them to take action when class concludes. (2) Ministry leaders, both in the church and community, are also invited to share with the class about the needs of their ministries or organizations. Upon hearing these leaders, class participants may find ministry matches in keeping with their unique design and choose to join those causes, or at least explore them, at the conclusion of class. For Lesson 10, we dispense with a lecture so that more guest speakers are able to share during the large group time. In your locale, you may choose to add this component or simply have more time in small groups.

****Celebration**

Here at Fellowship, all of the classes come together for a dinner celebration where class participants are given the opportunity to share their Missional Vision Boards or their answers to the sharing questions from Lesson 11. At the dinner, each woman is also given a token of remembrance from the class. One year we had a number of artists paint each participant an oil painting of an apple (5 "X 7") to symbolize the fact that (1) they are the apple of God's eye, (2) a unique one-of-a-kind creation like the painting, and (3) that they too should use their gifts, as the artists did, to bless others. This was a great hit with the women. Be creative in choosing a memento that will have some significance for your women. *Woman On A Mission* t-shirts, available on the website at www.womanonamission.net., make great gifts and may be purchased for $14.00 each plus shipping and handling.

For smaller *Woman On A Mission* classes, the additional class meeting (in our sample schedule above, the December 10th meeting) for a separate celebration brunch or dinner may not be necessary because adequate time is available to celebrate during Lesson 11 class meeting.

First Day of Class: Members pay for and receive their books, a class schedule, and an outline of the lecture for that day. An outline of lectures is available each week; contact Linda Slaton at Lslaton@fellowshiponline.com. for a copy. A small group discussion guide for each class meeting is found in the section to follow.

THE ROLE OF THE INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANT

For women to experience any lasting fruit from this study, each participant *must* do the homework. Because the process is primarily one of self-discovery, time for reflection is a must. Each lesson builds on the previous lessons. In some cases an exercise cannot be completed until a previous exercise is completed. I cannot stress enough the importance of completing each lesson before proceeding to the next. From the beginning of the course, class directors and facilitators would be wise to encourage sincere commitment on the part of participants. Those who cannot commit to do the lessons consistently and completely should be encouraged to take the class at another time when their schedules allow adequate time for homework.

To discover one's unique, God-given design, each woman must not only connect with herself by completing the exercises but she must also connect with her Creator. Without the Holy Spirit's help and guidance, she cannot answer the tough questions posed in the study. Leaders, challenge your women to spend time with God, to listen to Him and diligently seek Him in this process, as Jeremiah 29:13 encourages, *with all their hearts*. When they do, they *will* find Him and they *will* hear from Him.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

For each day of class I have included a session-to-session discussion guide that will offer suggestions on how to utilize the small group time. The notes will give facilitators a feel for what I deem most important in each lesson.

Know this: I will be praying for your group as you begin this adventure with the women that God brings your way. My fervent prayer is that each of you will indeed discover the blessed joy of glorifying your Father by accomplishing the work He has preordained for you. There is nothing like a life directed in such a way! It is a glorious adventure, full of challenge and sweet satisfaction! May God bless your journey. If I can aid you in any way, please let me know.

~ Linda Slaton

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Small Group Plan– First Day of Class

OBJECTIVE:

1. To get to know each other and become comfortable in the group setting
2. To model how to share your story in 15 minutes.

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission study guide
Rosters of the group for participants
Bold markers (not light colors) for each woman
1 sheet of drawing paper for each woman

SUMMARY:

Share stick drawings of family
Sharing questions
Facilitator: family story (original and adult)

OPENING:

Let your group know that you will spend the first half of the time getting to know each other and the last portion, in sharing your story. Tell them that they will share their stories next week as a part of their homework for Lesson 1. As you tell your story, you will be modeling for them how to tell theirs in the allotted time,15 minutes.

SHARING QUESTIONS:

The questions below are meant to serve as ice-breakers. Be sure to get to the last two questions while leaving time for your story and closing comments at the end (25 minutes). Note: The goal here is to lead the group from shallow sharing to greater transparency. Once your group moves to a deeper level of sharing, do not use questions that may illicit less deep responses (Questions 2 and 3).

1. Draw **your family**, using stick figures. Single women may draw their family of origin or may wish to treat significant friends as members of their family.

   - Include a **symbol of a hobby or special interest**. (horseshoe – a love of horses.)

   - Indicate **something you like about yourself**. (a physical characteristic or something more abstract, a kind heart or sense of humor.) Circle the part of you most that is representative of your answer.

- You only have 2 minutes!

- Allow each woman 1 minute or less to share her drawing.

2. Do you have a favorite quote or saying? Share it with the group.

3. What's your favorite movie or book?

4. Why are you here in *Woman on a Mission*?

5. How did God speak to you from the lecture today/tonight?

YOUR FAMILY STORY:

15 minutes + 5 minutes for group to interact with you and 5 minutes for closing comments and prayer

- Model for them how to share their story next week by taking this assignment seriously and being vulnerable. Go below the surface. You do not have to share your deepest secrets and pain but do be real. Let them know you struggle just like they do and haven't "arrived" at some spiritual peak that places you above them.

- Invite questions when you finish.

CLOSING (10 minutes)

Share **Tips for a Great Small Group**:

1. Confidentiality is a must. What's said in group, stays in group.

2. Avoid husband bashing.

3. Be sensitive to other denominations in attendance. Oftentimes in Bible study settings, many denominations come together to do the study. Don't assume everyone shares your denominational or non-denominational preference.

4. Don't TRIP:

   - **Don't <u>Top</u>** another's stories: "Oh, the same thing happened to me. . . " Or "I know just what you mean . . . Let me tell you about my experience with that." Or, "That's nothing, you should hear what happened to me. . . "

   - **Don't <u>Rescue</u>:** Don't try to fix or make things better. Don't give advice. Allow each woman to be where she is at the moment. Trust that they are capable of stewarding their own lives.

   - **Don't <u>Ignore</u> Pain** or intense emotion: If you want to devalue another's pain, ignore it or become visibly anxious. If someone else's pain causes you anxiety, don't let on. Be still and "present." This will feel very validating; don't squirm or rush in to rescue them.

   - **Don't Give <u>Pat</u> Answers:** Avoid these like the plague: Well, did you pray about it? We all have problems. Did you have your quiet time today? Simplistic responses discount feelings.

- **Remind women that their homework is Lesson 1.** The key self-discovery exercise is telling your family stories. Have them turn to page 7 – 11 as you explain. Then read together the first paragraph on page 11.

- Encourage everyone to do their homework each week because each lesson builds on the last and to be here, on time, every week.

- Pray for your women and the journey ahead. Do not EVER ask someone to pray unless you are POSITIVE that they are comfortable with praying aloud.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 1

This week's small group time will be different from other lessons in one key way: you will not have time to go over the Bible study questions because telling stories will take all of the small group time.

OBJECTIVE:

To get to know everyone through the telling of stories

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission study guide (each week)
Drawing paper and markers for absentees

SUMMARY:

Introduction of absentees
Telling family stories

1. Greet anyone who was absent last week. Tell them (and everyone else) that they can listen to the lecture online if they should have to miss class. Go to women.fellowshiponline.com and click on *Listen to Weekly Classes*, and *Woman on a Mission*.

2. Absentees should draw their families as a way of introducing themselves (as everyone did last week). Tell them to include a symbol of a hobby or interest and to circle something they like about themselves. Give them one minute to draw their families and a minute or less to share their drawings. While they take a minute to draw, ask, "Who remembers something shared last week about the family drawings? Or about something someone said about what they liked about themselves?"

3. Let your women know that typically small group time will be spent going over, or at least touching on, all the sections of the lesson, but this week the small group time will be used exclusively for telling stories.

4. Get started on stories as quickly as possible. Remind them before anyone starts to "mind the clock;" they each have 15 minutes and that you will give the storyteller a heads up when they have 2 minutes left to go.

5. Thank each woman as she completes her story. Invite questions/comments after each story, spending a minute or two, at most. Keep watch on the time!

6. If there is not enough time for everyone to give her story this week, not to worry: some of the small group time next week will be devoted to finishing stories.

7. Some stories may not require the full 15 minutes, and you may have time to spare at the end. If you do, ask your group: What spoke to you from the lecture today? And also, what did you get out of the lesson; what stands out as you think back on the commentary portion of the lesson?

8. Remind everyone to do Lesson 2 for next week.

9. Close in prayer, lifting up any issues or concerns that came to light from today as the women shared their stories.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 2

OBJECTIVE:

1. To embrace the concept that the point of life is to bring glory to the Father because we have been bought with a price and are not our own
2. To explore current reasons for being a Christ-follower and share activities or pastimes that they enjoy today or have in the past

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission

SUMMARY:

Finishing stories
The point of life and the terms purpose and mission
Reasons for following Christ today
Enjoyable activities
Spiritual gifts

1. Finish sharing family stories first. Remind women that they each have 15 minutes to do so.

2. When finished, if time allows, focus briefly on the Bible study portion of the lesson. The first section in this lesson is *What is the Point of Life*? Beginning on page 14 we look at several passages to help us answer this important question. What, according to questions 1 – 7, is the point of our lives? Allow time for the women to look over their responses and then open the discussion. The answer is: *the point of life is to glorify God because we are not our own. We have been bought with a price, bought with the blood of His Son Jesus*. I will have talked about the Gospel of Christ, question 3, during my lecture.

   In each lesson, remember to focus primarily on the Stop Sign questions.

3. Go to question 9 and camp here a while. Invite everyone to weigh in, but don't put anyone on the spot. Perhaps not everyone knows Christ personally. Remind your women that the question is NOT why did they come to Christ, but why do they get up every day and continue to believe in Him day after day.

4. Purpose and Mission, page 17: I discuss this in the lecture. If your group is not

listening to the lecture, be sure to touch on the two concepts. *Purpose* will refer to God's overall intentions for His people. *Mission* will be used to refer to the unique and specific part each individual is to play in God's kingdom on earth.

5. Page 18: Touch on each question, if time, and encourage everybody to share something about what they enjoyed as a child and currently.

6. Page 19: Touch on the words and phrases used to describe us in the passages found in question 18. This is how our Creator sees us!

7. Page 20: Discuss findings from the Spiritual Gifts Inventory, questions 20 and 21.

8. Touch on questions 24 and 25 about Becky Bruns' story and questions 26 and 27 about Mary Lynn Nelson's story.

9. Homework, Lesson 3: Participants will be doing another online assessment, *Servants by Design*™ at a cost of $35.00, which may be paid for by credit card. Encourage your women to start on the assessment when they are rested and not rushed. It takes about two hours to complete. Be sure to point out that they may pause at the end of each page if needed and come back to finish later without losing their answers.

10. Close in prayer, lifting up any pressing concerns.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 3

OBJECTIVE:

1. To become familiar with the *Servant's by Design*™ personality inventory
2. To share personal profiles with group members in order to deepen understanding of the inventory

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission
Servant's by Design™ Profile Report

SUMMARY:

Servant's by Design™ inventory

1. Use the questions on page 32 through 33 to guide your discussion of *Servant's by Design*™. Invite everyone to answer questions 1 and 2.

2. Then invite open discussion around questions 3 through 6.

3. Ask, From the lecture or from your personal Profile Report, what did you learn that you find particularly interesting or helpful in your quest to know yourself and understand significant others in your life? Allow the discussion to flow freely.

4. Homework: Lesson 4

5. Close in prayer, being sure to thank God for creating us the way He did and lifting up any pressing concerns.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 4

OBJECTIVE:

1. To understand the first two ways we are to glorify God – through worship and personal growth into Christlikeness
2. To understand the importance of worshiping God in spirit (with emotions) and in truth (as He really is and with our intellect)
3. To explore personal wants and past accomplishments

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission

SUMMARY:

Lecture
Worship
Top Wants
Past Accomplishments

1. First ask, What spoke to you from the lecture?

2. Say, As we saw in the lesson, we are to worship God "in spirit and in truth," meaning with our emotions heart and with our intellect using the scriptures to know God as He really is. What made God want to spit out of His mouth the church of Laodicea (question 7)?

3. Touch on question 8.

4. Commentary on *Worship in Spirit* and *Worship in Truth*: Ask, What did you highlight in these sections (pages 46-49)? Discuss. If no one comments on the section Worship Is Important (page 48), ask, Can you identify with Linda when she wondered why God seems to demand adoration and attention? Discuss.

5. *Wants Lists*: Touch on questions 15 and 16.

6. *What Do You Want Most*? Touch on question 21, particularly Career/Ministry, Family/Friends and Personal/Spiritual Growth. Camp here a while.

7. Remembering Past Accomplishments: Camp on question 23, allowing everyone to weigh in. Give the women permission to brag on themselves, reminding them that God created them and gave them gifts of His choosing. Invite them to talk about anything they deem significant.

8. Close in prayer.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 5

OBJECTIVE:

1. To explore two additional ways that we are to glorify God: through love and service
2. To discuss group insights regarding participant's use of time

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission

SUMMARY:

Lecture
Love
Time Management

Facilitators: Keep in mind that the goal is for every woman to discover *who she is* and *why she's here*. The more each woman participates in the small group discussion, the greater clarity she will gain on these key concepts. The more you listen attentively and show you care, the more willing each woman will be to share transparently.

1. Ask, What spoke to you from the lecture? What action do you need to take in response to the message?

2. Say, Let's look first at the section on love, beginning on page 66; we will get to Time Maps later. Cover questions 1 through 6, particularly the Stop Signs, questions 1 and 3.

3. Say, Look over Day Two. What spoke to you from these questions on love (7-18)? Allow participants to share any insights.

4. Cover as many as possible of the Stop Sign questions regarding time, particularly 23 and 30 through 34.

5. Be sure that everyone has labeled properly the Target on page 78. Starting from the outside, label the rings *worship, growth, love* and *service*.

6. Before closing in prayer, have someone read the box on page 79.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 6

OBJECTIVE:

1. To explore the ways in which wrong thinking about motherhood might derail a woman's pursuit of her God-given mission
2. To explore life balance and core values
3. To discuss Joy White's journey toward mission

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission

SUMMARY:

Lecture
Motherhood
Joy White's story
Time management

Facilitators: Always be willing to stop the class discussion to pray for anyone who is struggling in a particular area. Today, you may find that some women are struggling with guilt over having not "been there" for their children during the formative years. (See point 4 below.)

1. Ask, what is the most meaningful thing you took from the lecture?

2. Discuss the commentary beginning on page 81. Do you agree that motherhood should be considered a temporary assignment? Do you agree that a woman's personhood cannot be defined solely in terms of her motherhood?

3. Spend some time on the Stop Signs on motherhood and life balance, particularly questions 4, 5.

4. Be aware that some women may be feeling a huge load of guilt regarding the subject of motherhood. Direct those who may be struggling to the next-to-last paragraph on 88, which begins, "If you're reading this in mid-life. . . " You may want to have someone read this paragraph to the group. Ask them to comment on it as a way of prompting honest discussion.

5. Cover question 13 and encourage them to be willing to brag on themselves because in doing so they are really bragging on God.

6. To engage your women in discussion about the stories of women on a mission (like Joy White's in this lesson), say, Didn't you enjoy reading about Joy White and how God led her to work with the hearing impaired and then to the Latino people? Allow for discussion to flow. Then direct them to questions 15 through 17 and discuss.

7. Be sure to leave time to discuss core values, particularly questions 19, 20 and 22.

8. Close in prayer.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 7

OBJECTIVE:

1. To explore how wrong thinking about marriage boundaries may derail a woman's pursuit of her God-given mission
2. To discuss work and ministry experience in light of participant's future work or mission
3. To consider participant's passions for ministry

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission

SUMMARY:

Marriage and boundaries
Rosalind Cook's story
Work/Ministry story
Passions

1. Start with the usual question: What spoke to you from the lecture? After one person answers, invite others to weigh in by asking, "Who else? What spoke to others of you?" Allow for discussion to flow.

2. Before delving into the subject of marriage, remind your women that we want to avoid husband bashing while being honest about our personal struggles. Then ask, What did you highlight from the commentary?

3. On the subject of submission, depending on the direction of the discussion, you may want to point out that wives **are** called to submit but that does not mean that we don't think for ourselves. We will sometimes differ with our husbands. Our differences provide opportunities for us to behave like adults and talk openly, honestly, and respectfully. That communication leads to intimacy and trust, but may not always lead to agreement on everything. We can agree to disagree.

4. Touch on Stop Sign questions regarding marriage, particularly, 4, 5, 11 and 12.

5. Ask, How did you like Rosalind Cook's story? Be sure to touch on Stop Sign question 13.

6. Discuss Stop Sign questions, particularly questions 18 – 22.

7. Regarding passions for ministry, be sure to cover the Stop Signs 23-26.

8. Close in prayer, lifting up any pressing concerns or issues.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 8

OBJECTIVE:

1. To hear from a guest speaker who is making a difference for the kingdom
2. To explore ways in which God might use our wounds for His purposes
3. To promote healing in women who are wounded through the sharing of their struggles
4. To discuss the first pass at mission resumes
5. To prepare participants for coming lessons and celebration event

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission

SUMMARY:

Lecture
Guest speaker (s)
Commentary and personal woundedness
Sandy Griffith's story
Favorite verbs
Mission resume

Facilitators: Be aware of the sensitive nature of this lesson. Many women may be reluctant to share transparently about their wounds. Others may want to share too much and later feel over-exposed. While we want to encourage transparency, we need to give them permission to "pass" on those questions that are more difficult for them to answer. Meanwhile, be ready to model transparency yourself.

1. Ask first, What was most significant to you from the lecture or the guest speaker's comments? Allow several to weigh in, but move quickly to the homework; there is much to cover.

2. Commentary, pages 115-120: ask, What did you highlight? Allow the discussion to flow. If you need to prompt your group to open up, ask them to turn to page 119, and ask someone to read the paragraph beginning, "Like Hunter. . . ," then ask, Do you agree with Henri Nouwen that "the first step in healing is not a step away from the pain but a step toward it?" Discuss.

3. Spend some time on Stop Signs 4 - 8 (pages 120-121). Do not call on women to answer, but allow them to volunteer.

4. Cover questions 9 through 11, allowing ample time for 11; it may be rich with treasures to mine.

5. Ask, What strikes you as most significant from pages 122-124?

6. Sandy Griffith's story: Cover Stop Signs 14 through 16.

7. Favorite verbs: Touch on question 17.

8. If time, ask women to share portions of their mission resume, particularly if any section elicited "aha" moments or special insights. If you do not have time to cover the entire lesson, note where your discussion ended and try to get to missed parts next week.

9. With the end of the semester coming to a close in a few weeks, begin now to prepare participants for what is to come. Have them turn to each of the remaining lessons:

   • Lesson 9: Assembling the data and writing a mission statement.

   • Lesson 10: Developing mission resume and mission plan

   • Lesson 11: Creating a missional vision board and preparing sharing questions for the celebration event.

   Brainstorm ways in which they may approach the vision board in Lesson 11. They may be as creative as they wish, using any medium they desire. (See instructions on page 170-171.) The goal is to visually represent their mission focus or the result they expect to see as they pursue their mission.

   • Encourage them to read over the exercises to come this week and enlist your help, if needed.

   • Celebration: Begin to plan with other leaders and share those plans with class participants.

10. Close in prayer, lifting up pressing concerns that arose out of your discussion.

Facilitators: Plan to have your missional vision board completed at least one week prior to Lesson 11 to give your women an example to follow. During small group time for Lesson 10, you will "show and tell" your vision board, which will hopefully spark some creative ideas in participants.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 9

OBJECTIVE:

1. To hear from a guest speaker about how she is making a difference for the kingdom
2. To understand the path to and definition of abundant life
3. To embrace the truth that without vision, we fail to really live
4. To gain insight into the Sweet Spot of participant's Compass of a Woman on a Mission

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission
Facilitators: Missional Vision Boards, if completed

SUMMARY:

Lecture and commentary
Compass of a Woman on a Mission
Mission Statements and My Essence

1. Ask, What was most significant to you from the lecture and the guest speaker's comments?

2. Ask, From the commentary on Day One, what did you highlight and why?

3. Touch on Stop Sign 2.

4. Say, The verses we looked up on the next few pages are key to our journey. Let's discuss these briefly so that we clearly see what Jesus was about while on earth and what we are to be about as His followers. Note especially questions 4, 5 and 11.

5. Discuss highlights from the commentary on pages 137-139.

6. Vision: Discuss commentary and then do Stop Sign 13 regarding future vision.

7. Skipping the compass of a Woman on a Mission, go straight to mission statements to see how many have written one. Celebrate those who have done so, allowing each woman to read her statement. Also, have your women share their my essence statements with their group. For the women who have not been able to articulate a mission statement, have them turn back to the compass on page 150. Brainstorm together ways in which the circles overlap to create a "Sweet Spot" or mission for those women who are struggling.

   NOTE: At Fellowship Bible Church, we have a Mission Coach Team of five coaches whose role it is to help women articulate their mission statements and then become engaged in their missions. Toward the end of the semester, we encourage the women taking the class to make appointments with a coach as needed. For a fee, participants in *Woman on a Mission* classes anywhere in the country may engage their services via telephone sessions. To find out more about the coach team, go to www.womanonamission.net and click on *Find a Mission Coach*. The ideal time for participants to engage a coach is after completing Lesson 9 and thereafter.

8. For those women in your group who are still stuck, encourage them to diligently seek God during the next few weeks. I tell my women, "Don't be so focused on the **fruit**, landing a mission, that you forget the **root**, Jesus Christ." Also helpful to them is this bit of advice: If you don't know God's will for you regarding your mission, go with what you **do** know. What do you know? Have you heard anything at all? Oftentimes, they **have** heard something that directs them to take one action step. Challenge them to

   (1) Take that step and see where it leads,
   (2) Stop worrying about not hearing **everything** they hoped to hear, and
   (3) Seek Christ first.

9. Close in prayer.

Small Group Plan–
Lesson 10

OBJECTIVE:

1. To hear from guest speakers about how she is making a difference for the kingdom
2. To discuss participant's mission resumes and plans
3. To celebrate wins
4. To encourage participants to continue to refine their statements and plans so that they may in the not-too-distant-future truly make a difference in the world around them
5. To communicate details regarding the celebration next week

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission
Facilitators: Missional Vision Board to "show and tell"

SUMMARY:

Mission Resume
Mission Plan

1. Ask, What spoke to you from the guest speaker's comments today?

2. Missional Vision Boards: Facilitators, take a few minutes to share your boards with your group. Encourage them to have their boards completed next week. If they still have not landed their mission, encourage them to "go with what they do know" and to illustrate that visually.

3. Ask, As we near the end of the course, what concerns, if any, do you have?

Facilitators: If anyone expresses a concern that they still don't know what God wants them to do or that they still haven't heard a thing from God, direct them to last week's message. In that message I tried to communicate that, first, this is a common fear at this point in the study. And second, that if they don't feel they are hearing from God, what they need to do is "focus on the root"—Christ. Remember the adage, "*Don't be so focused on the fruit that you forget the root*." Encourage them to spend some focused time on simply being with Jesus in quiet solitude, listening, praying and connecting with Spirit within Who is constantly trying to get through to us. I believe that when we are truly ready to be used by God, He will indeed speak.

The journey to become a *Woman on a Mission* is a spiritual one and a very *personal* one ---the women must connect with **themselves**, as the exercises in this course have led them to do, but they must also connect with the **Spirit of Christ** that lives within. You cannot do this for them; neither can I. They must do it themselves. They must seek Christ from the heart and He will reveal His will and their mission to them.

4. Mission resume: Ask, How did you experience the creation of your resume? What insights did you glean from the exercise?

5. Invite the women to share portions of their resume, particularly mission statements (if they did not have them completed last week), vision for the future, strengths, and life experience. Celebrate the progress they have made! For those still stuck, encourage them to make an appointment with you or with a mission coach to help them move forward and take action.

6. Mission plan: Invite one or two women to read their paragraphs explaining their mission statements (Step 1, page 162).

7. Turn to page 167, my mission plan chart. Ask women to weigh in on each of the Steps. Spend ample time here and celebrate every win. In doing so, you will add great value to the process they have undertaken these many weeks.

8. Remind the women that next week is the last class meeting and a celebration event. Turn to Lesson 11 and point out that it consists of two parts—your missional vision board and sharing questions, both of which they will be invited to share with the large group.

9. Communicate details regarding the celebration.

10. Close in prayer.

Small Group Plan– Lesson 11

NOTE: For some groups this class will be the final meeting of the semester. For others, those with larger numbers of women or with both morning and evening classes, this meeting will be the next-to-last meeting. An additional meeting is held for a Celebration Brunch or Dinner for the purpose of bringing all participants together and allowing those who desire to do so to share their Mission Vision Boards and answers to sharing questions in Lesson 11 with the entire group of participants. (See the introduction to the Leader's Guide, page 6 and 7, sections marked * and **.)

OBJECTIVE:

1. To reflect on the course and celebrate every win
2. To allow participants to share their Missional Vision Boards and have an opportunity to praise God for what He has shown them through *Woman on a Mission*, as directed in the sharing questions.

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission study guide
Missional Vision Boards

SUMMARY:

Sharing Missional Vision Boards and Sharing Questions

1. Since there is no lecture or guest speaker today, the entire class time is spent in small groups to allow every woman to share her Missional Vision Boards and answers to the sharing questions.

2. The extra-long small group time is also an ideal time for participants to encourage each other to complete whatever exercises they have not completed and to then take courageous action toward their mission. Encourage the women, if they are still uncertain as to their direction and next steps, to be willing to explore possibilities and go on "field trips" to investigate appropriate opportunities in their church, community, and around the world.

3. Close in prayer and challenge each woman to continue to pursue God's direction regarding her mission. Remind them that God desires each woman to experience abundant life as she seeks to glorify Him by accomplishing the work that He has given her to do (John 17:4).

Celebration Brunch/Dinner

OBJECTIVE:

1. To enjoy a brunch or dinner together with all participants of *Woman on a Mission* as a celebration of the conclusion of the class and of individual life change, epiphanies, and mission discovery
2. To allow each participant who so desires to share her Missional Vision Board and answers to sharing questions in Lesson 11 with the larger group of women
3. For the class director or presenter to challenge the women to take courageous action in keeping with their personal goals and mission plans

SUPPLIES:

Woman on a Mission
Vision Boards
Individual's contributions to the brunch/dinner
End of the semester gift or memento, if applicable

SUMMARY:

1. Opening prayer for the meal and 30 minutes for eating the brunch/dinner

2. Women are invited to stand and share their Missional Vision Boards and an answer of their choosing to the sharing questions from Lesson 11.

3. Close in prayer and challenge each woman to continue to pursue God's direction regarding her mission. Remind them that God desires each woman to experience abundant life as she seeks to glorify Him by accomplishing the work that He has given her to do (John 17:4).