



# Choosing *Him*

## Companion Study Guide

JUANA MIKELS  
& PAMELA BUNN



*Questions for Reflection and Discussion*



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# Choosing Him All Over Again

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CHAPTER 1

# SOMETHING'S MISSING

1. What does the author begin to do once alone on the plane home?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. a. With whom does the author compare her husband, and in doing so, what was she forgetting about her husband?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- b. What triggers a slide into comparing?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Are there areas where you are comparing in a dangerous way? What can you begin to do instead?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. When the author struggled with “something missing” from her life, why did she have trouble coming up with the answer?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Read Proverbs 1:1–7 and Psalm 111:10.
  - a. What is the source of true wisdom?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. What does it mean to you to fear the Lord?

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c. What are the results of fearing and following God?

d. In what situations do you presently need God's wisdom and understanding?

6. "The time bomb felt like it was about to explode with anxiety regarding the future."

Discontentment and self-focus can easily lead to worry. Read Philippians 4:6-7.

a. What do these verses say to do with anxiety?

b. What is the promised blessing of doing so?

7. What does Matthew 6:33-34 say to do with worry, and what will be the result?

8. a. What is God's opinion of worrying?

b. What does worrying imply about the worrier?

c. In what areas are you currently fretting or anxious? As you write down these areas, take the time to offer them to God, with thanksgiving, and ask for His perspective.

## Something's Missing

9. The author was looking for lasting love. Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 with 1 John 3:16,18; 4:9-10,19,21 and note the Biblical characteristics of true love. How well do these describe you?

10. a. Read Philippians 2:3-4 and Romans 12:9-10. What challenges you from the Philippians and Romans passages about how you love others?

b. How has Jesus demonstrated this kind of love toward you?

c. Take time to pray that God will develop these godly attributes in you.

### PRAYER

*Lord, You are the giver of wisdom and the author of love. Help me seek You, that I may learn from You and Your word what love is. I want to love sacrificially. Amen.*

[illegible]



CHAPTER 2

## THE NOTE

1. Who mattered most to the author as she made her plans to move out? Who matters most to you throughout each day, and how does this affect your decisions and actions? Consider your schedule, credit card statement, smart phone use, etc.

2. What do you think of Janet Erskin Stewart's quote, "If we get our own way, we nurse a hideous idol called self. But if we give up our own way, we get God"?

What chunk of "self" is God nudging you to surrender to Him today as an idol that is keeping you from "getting more of God"? As an act of true surrender, you may want to get on your knees and offer it to Him with open hands.

3. While our culture tells us to look out for number one, and to do things your way, what do the following verses warn against and/or commend? Mark those that mean the most to you.

a. Proverbs 3:5-6

b. Proverbs 14:12

c. 2 Corinthians 10:5

d. Colossians 2:8

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4. It seems as though once the thought of leaving her husband filled the author's mind and she had rationalized her reasons for leaving, that there was no real consideration of any possible disadvantages to her decision and no turning back. The author tells us that the enemy was at work to lead her astray. What do you learn and what can you apply from the following verses?

a. John 8:44, 47

b. John 10:10

c. Ephesians 4:27

d. 2 Timothy 2:26

e. James 4: 7–8

5. From John 10:10, and concerning relationships, how and what does the enemy seek to . . .

a. Steal?

b. Kill?

c. Destroy?

d. Have you known evidence of this destruction, and what can you do about it?

6. What does James 4:1–3 say is the root of our being at odds with and quarreling with each other? Is this true for you in any relationship? If so, will you take time to confess your responsibility in this, and choose how you will behave the next time you are so tempted?

7. The following references give ways to pray for ourselves and those we love. Next to each one, write a request, and use these to pray boldly and expectantly.

a. John 17:15–18

b. 1 Corinthians 10:13

c. Galatians 6:7

d. Ephesians 6:10–18

e. Hebrews 3:12–13

f. Hebrews 4:14–16

g. James 4:7

#### PRAYER

*Heavenly Father, forgive me for wanting my own way and for allowing my self-centeredness to blind me to the devil's schemes and fill me with worry about my life and the lives of those I love. Make me aware of and protect me from the schemes of the enemy, causing me instead to trust and follow You. Amen.*

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CHAPTER 3

## A LOOK FURTHER BACK

1. What are some positive, helpful things you have brought into your marriage from your past? Think of role models, habits, examples, lessons learned, etc.
  
2. Any sin—broken relationships, divorce, substance or physical abuse, uncontrolled anger, nagging, narcissism, gluttony, negativism, etc.—can affect family members and tendencies can be passed down for generations. If there is generational sin in your family,
  - a. What negative effects is it presently having on you and in your behavior? Acknowledge its legitimate causes and effects, and be honest about your thoughts as well as actions.
  
  - b. What can you do to break the chain? Be willing to have God search your heart and confess your unwanted, unhealthy reactions and habits. Take time to ask boldly that this be stopped, and be deliberate in choosing new behaviors that substitute for the old ways.
  
3. Read Ephesians 4:29–32.
  - a. What does the Ephesians passage say to put off, and put on instead?
  
  - b. How can you practically do these things in your relationships?
  
  - c. Is there someone(s) you need to forgive who has hurt you in the past? As a deliberate act of your will, and of faith, choose to forgive and release your hurt and resentment to Christ Jesus who forgave you.

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4. “A Christian family is intended by God to be a place of total acceptance and love.”

a. How well does this describe your family and home?

b. Where are you most challenged in doing your part to make this happen?

5. What can you do to begin making your home a safe and joyful place? See Galatians 5:16–17; 22–23; Ephesians 5:1–4; Philippians 2:3–4.

6. Read Colossians 3:1–18.

a. What is true about your life in Christ, from verses 1–3?

b. “Therefore,” what are you to “put to death” and “rid yourself of”?

c. What are you to clothe yourself with and do instead that will help promote a peaceful marriage and home?

7. Read Romans 8:28.

a. In what things does God work good for those who love Him and are called by Him? Does this include good *and* bad things?

b. From 2 Corinthians 1:4 and James 1:2–4, what are reasons God allows suffering and trials in the lives of His followers?

c. Which of these has borne out as “good” that the Lord has worked in your situation(s)? Will you thank Him for this?

8. From Deuteronomy 31:8; Joshua 1:5,9; Isaiah 49:15 with Psalm 27:10; Psalm 73:23–26 and 90:14, where is your source for satisfaction, security, companionship, and a joyful perspective?

9. How can you help, or show love and friendship to, one who is lonely today—your husband, a child, or a friend? What do you need to set aside in order, actively and intentionally, to listen and *care*?

#### PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, thank You for loving me and freeing me from slavery to sin and the past. Thank You that in You I can set aside what lies behind and press onward to Your upward call. Thank you that because You have forgiven me, I can now choose to forgive those who have hurt me, and relinquish the burden of bitterness and resentment and making excuses for my ungodly behavior. Make me an ambassador of You to my family, that Your love and grace will flow through me. Amen.*



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CHAPTER 4

## MEETING MR. RIGHT

1. “God reveals His will by the closing and opening of doors. His refusals are His greatest mercies.”

a. Where have you experienced this in your life in the past or recently?

b. What doors are currently closed to you, that seem like a roadblock? Will you choose to see that these “disappointments are God’s appointments”?

c. How do Psalm 119:68 and Proverbs 16:4a, 9 encourage you as you wait for Him to open a new door?

2. Read Isaiah 55:8–9. What does this tell us about God that helps us when faced with a closed door or refusal of our plans?

3. Hannah Whitall Smith said, “Receive everything in your life as from God’s hand,” and “Man’s part is to trust, and God’s part is to work.” With what specifically is God asking you to trust Him today, in your marriage, your family? Will you choose to receive and accept His timing and ways, and trust Him to work His divine purposes?

4. If you are married,

a. Can you trace God’s providential hand through your early months of knowing each other?

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- b. List the things you liked about your husband then, and thank God for them.
  
- 5.
  - a. How do dating practices in our current culture compare to Elisabeth Elliot's list of dating rules from her upbringing?
  
  - b. In what areas do you need to relinquish pressure or temptation to God, and trust Him to give you resolve and strength?
  
  - c. Name friends with whom you are close who can hold you accountable to purity, in singleness and marriage.
  
- 6. From the dating principles Elisabeth Elliot sets out in her list,
  - a. What are the foundational truths, or principles, undergirding them? See 1 Corinthians 11:3 and Ephesians 5:22–23 for help. A principle is a truth (in this case, about God and man) that is always true.
  
  - b. What character qualities and strengths could result from being trained in and espousing these practices?
  
  - c. How do these qualities reflect a healthy understanding of and relationship with Jesus Christ?
  
  - d. If you have sons or daughters, what can you do to train them accordingly?

7. Read the love story recounted in Genesis 24. Abraham's loyal servant was likely Eliezer.

a. Trace the providence of God through the chapter.

b. What drove Eliezer in his pursuit?

c. Describe the purity Eliezer sought and valued.

d. What do you think of the passion at the end of the chapter? From what does it result?

e. How is Proverbs 3:5–6 borne out in this story?

#### PRAYER

*Loving and providential Lord, help me to remember that You are in control of the entire universe, and in control of my life. Everything You do is always good. I gratefully receive what You have ordered in my life, and entrust to You my disappointments, believing that You are absolutely trustworthy and Your purposes cannot be thwarted. Amen.*

[illegible]

CHAPTER 5

## ME? A GENTLE AND QUIET SPIRIT?

1.
  - a. What natural talents, strengths, and tendencies were you born with?
  - b. How have you employed these to make your way through life, even to your advantage, so far?
  - c. Read Ephesians 2:10. How has God developed and honed your strengths for His purposes? Is there evidence of His smoothing rough edges?
2. Read Nehemiah 2:1–9, 11–18 and 5:1–13, taking note of Nehemiah’s responses to distinct difficulties.
  - a. What were his different emotions? Were they justified?
  - b. What was his regular practice, stated or implied, before reacting/acting out? Note verses.
  - c. Give the results of his measured actions for each situation.
  - d. Where would it benefit you and your family to practice Nehemiah’s habits, and how can you begin?

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3. Read 1 Peter 3:1–6. “In the same way be submissive” refers to the previous chapter and the Greek verb that calls for submission to a recognized authority. No inferiority is implied, but rather a role or function necessary for the orderly operation of a home.

a. What reason is given for the wife to behave the way Peter describes in these verses?

b. List the characteristics of the godly wife. Which is most unnatural to you? Most natural?

c. What is the source of “unfading beauty”? What do you think this means?

d. To whom is it valuable, and what does this mean to you?

e. Do you think a “gentle and quiet spirit” means a “quiet” person? How is this spirit exhibited?

f. Would you say you are growing in a gentle and quiet spirit? Is this a desire and goal for you as you grow older? If so, what must you do or stop doing to develop this trait?

4. Read 1 Timothy 2:9–11 with Titus 2:3–5.

a. What good deeds characterize the godly woman in these passages?

b. Do you agree that deeds speak louder than looks and adornment? Can you describe someone you know who effuses beauty from the inside out?



## Me? A Gentle and Quiet Spirit?

- c. It is a biblical concept that we learn from those older, and befriend and mentor those younger (even our children), in the ways of the Lord. By whom are you being taught, and whom are you teaching, these godly qualities? If you are not so involved, can you name someone you could approach about beginning such a relationship?
5. Titus commends that we be “busy at home.” Does this mean frenzied with activity? Read the following passages and find what they say this means.
- a. Galatians 6:9–10
  - b. 2 Thessalonians 3:11
  - c. 1 Timothy 5:13
  - d. 2 Peter 1:5–8
6. As we tend to our own spirits, it is vital we tend to our husband’s also, and invest the time to understand, know, and appreciate him. We can be like two rough rocks on the seashore, tumbling together in the water and rubbing together to smooth out the rough edges. When do you regularly spend uninterrupted time communicating with each other? What are two alternate activities you could begin to do to spend time together each week?

## PRAYER

*Dear Heavenly Father, only You can create in me a gentle and quiet spirit. I am willing to be made willing to make the changes You desire to make in me, that I might be pleasing to You and winsome to my husband. Teach me Your ways, and make me a different woman, who honors You with all I am and do. May I decrease and You increase. I love bearing Your name, “Christian,” and being Your workmanship. Amen.*

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CHAPTER 6

## A HOUSE BUILT ON SAND

1. What expectations did you have before marriage that were immediately challenged after the wedding? Have you been able to discuss them with your husband without blame or defensiveness, in honesty and love?

2. There are many good things available for us to do. How can you discern what is God's will for you? See Romans 12:1–2 for help, and say how you can apply this.

3. The Holy Spirit is given to all who believe at the moment of salvation. Look up the following verses and write how He ministers in our lives.

a. John 6:63

b. John 14:26

c. John 16:7–8

d. John 16:13–14

e. Romans 8:14

f. Romans 8:26–27

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g. 1 Corinthians 2:9–10

h. 2 Thessalonians 2:13

i. 1 John 3:24

4. When we do not have the indwelling Holy Spirit, we do not grasp these benefits. “The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:14) This was the case of the author in her early marriage.

a. For which of these roles of the Spirit in your life are you most grateful?

b. On which are you most dependent?

c. How has the Holy Spirit helped you in your marriage?

d. Where do you need His empowering and sanctifying right now? Will you take a moment to ask Him?

5. a. Who comes first in your thoughts, on your agenda for each day: you, your children, or your husband?

b. Who would your husband say comes first in your life?

c. Read Philippians 2:2–4. What needs to change to get your priorities right?

There is one wife who says “I iron my husband’s shirts first,” showing deference, in this menial task, to her husband. She practices putting him and his needs first *even in her ironing*, and it demonstrates her attitude of selflessness. Often when we begin with an action, the feelings follow. Think of specific ways you can alter your schedule and activities to honor your husband first.

6. Take a few minutes to recall and write down some fun memories from your first months or years of marriage. God, who delights in our pleasure, tucks these into our lives for our enjoyment and to give us some emotional “glue” to hold us close. Plan a time to remind your husband of these, and then *laugh*. Thank God for these gifts that only you and your husband share. *(It is fun at a dinner party to go around and ask couples to share a humorous story from their early years together. Not only can you all laugh hilariously together, but couples are reinforced in their ‘life story’ that has God’s unique imprint. Note: Make sure you have your husband’s permission before you share your story in public.)*

#### PRAYER

*Father God, Thank You for Your sovereign hand in my life, even when I was unaware You were present. Thank You that You give Your Spirit to guide, remind, convict, comfort, and enlighten me, and that He is always praying for me perfectly and working to sanctify me, to make me holy. Please order my priorities, in both my heart and my action, to honor You and to prefer my husband before myself. Amen.*

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CHAPTER 7

# HOUSE TORN DOWN

1. Can you recall moments of disillusionment in your marriage, or are you experiencing one now?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What were (or are) the basic beliefs you held (or hold) that caused this disillusionment? (For example, that men and women are the same, that my husband should be able to read my mind, that my husband will make choices like my father did, that marriage to the man I've dreamed of all my life ensures happiness, etc.)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Are these beliefs actually true? The author spent hour after hour with a therapist, but received no life-changing truth. On what do you base your worldview, and how reliable is it?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Disillusionment often leads to dissatisfaction and discontent. The author writes, "Sadly, during the early part of my marriage, I focused on me, me, me. My life. My issues. My problems. My wants." If you are battling dissatisfaction in your marriage, could a similar self-focus be the root? Be honest with yourself and consider why unmet expectations bother you so much, and whose satisfaction you are driven to achieve. As God reveals your deepest heart, confess all selfish ambition.



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5. Where are you on the spectrum between being fully present with those around you and always thinking of something else, checking your phone, or looking to the next thing? What could happen if you chose to put aside your “gotta go, gotta go; I gotta, I gotta, I gotta” attitude and embraced Jim Elliot’s advice to “be all there” for your husband? What would change in you? In your husband?

6. From Genesis 2, we learn that God made Eve as “a suitable helper” for Adam, from his rib. Some say that in taking a rib from Adam God meant that Eve should be not over Adam, or underneath him, but by his side. Even though they were made distinct from each other, God intended them to complement one another. From the following verses, note God’s intent in our union with our husbands.

a. Genesis 2:22–25

b. Genesis 24:62–67

c. Proverbs 5:17–19

d. Proverbs 31:10–12

e. Malachi 2:14–15

f. Acts 18:1–3, 18–19, 24–26

g. Romans 12:18

h. 1 Corinthians 7:3–5

i. 2 Corinthians 13:12,14

j. Ephesians 5:22–33

7. Write down several ways you and your husband are distinctly different.

a. How have these differences changed you, deepened your understanding of God's ways, or helped you be a better person?

b. Take time to thank God for these differences and the ways your husband has complemented, or “completed” you.

#### PRAYER

*Gracious and patient God, You know my deepest heart and will, yet You have chosen to set Your affection on me, and I thank You. Please help me set all my expectations in You, for You alone satisfy. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be alive and well in my marriage. Amen.*

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CHAPTER 8

PROVIDENCE

1. The author gave up on counselors and turned to church. To whom does she attribute this change of direction?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Have you had a situation where you have known that it was only God, in His goodness and grace, who planted a thought in your brain?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. How does this realization give value to being in the Word of God, in fellowship, and consistently exposing those we influence to do so?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Read Psalm 139.
  - a. Write all the actions God takes toward us or on our behalf.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - b. Write all the attributes/character traits of God you find.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - c. What was the psalmist's response to these truths about his LORD?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - d. What is your response?

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5. Name some of the indications that the author was resisting God and running from Him. Mark any of these that are true for you. (For example: known disobedience, seeking godly advice but then not following it, justifying wrong choices, majoring on minor or peripheral issues.)

6. Read Isaiah 43:1-7,18-21; 49:1,3,8a; Romans 8:28-30; Ephesians 1:3-14. From these passages,

a. Who initiates our salvation?

b. Give the verbs describing what God does for and to us.

c. For what are we chosen, called, and saved?

d. How well does this glorious purpose of God for believers' lives describe you?

7. "I was beginning to get the inkling that a good marriage was not something you found, but something you made. It was not so much about finding the right person, it was about being the right person."

a. In what areas are you actively *making*, or building up, your marriage?

b. In what areas are you learning to *be* the right person for your husband? While some innate personality traits will not change, they can always be channeled for good and shaped by the Holy Spirit for His good purposes in your union.

8. God says, “I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me. My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please. What I have planned, that I will do.” (Isaiah 46:8,10,11) What does this proclamation mean to you? Does what it tell you about God give you comfort, confidence, or fear? Take time to acknowledge Who He says He is, and thank Him for having good plans for your life and marriage. If He is irresistibly wooing you to Himself right now, bow your knee and give yourself to Him.

#### PRAYER

*Mighty and providential God, Who is always involved in our lives and active in working out Your plans, have Your way with me. Search me, O God, and identify whatever impedes my spiritual growth so I can leave it at the Cross. Please fulfill Your holy purposes for my life, and keep me ever grateful for Your lavish grace. Amen.*

[illegible]

CHAPTER 9

## A TURNING POINT

1. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17. What are some of the first signs the author was a new person after she gave her life to Christ?

2. What mark has God put on your habits, disciplines, tastes for reading, entertainment, activities, and expenditures?

3. Where do you sense He is wanting to get a greater hold, and what will you do about it?

4. The author started memorizing scripture, and it began to change her and the way she thought about life and God. What do these verses tell us about the importance of knowing God's Word?

a. Deuteronomy 6:6–9; 11:18–20

b. Deuteronomy 42:46–47

c. Psalm 119:160

d. Proverbs 4:13



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5. What do the following verses tell us about the benefits of God's Word?

a. Isaiah 55:10–11

b. Psalm 12:6

c. Psalm 119:11

d. Psalm 119:105, 130

e. Proverbs 4:20–22

f. Hebrews 4:12

6. The Author had a favorite verse, Psalm 37:4, “Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way to the Lord; trust in him.”

a. What does this tell us about the order of delighting in the Lord and receiving our desires?

b. How often do you fall into thinking the reverse should be true? Think of a situation where you thought you could be happy if only you had your way.

c. What does “delighting in the Lord” mean to you, and how can you do it?

7. When in the Garden of Gethsemane, just before His crucifixion, Jesus prayed, “Yet not as I will, but as you will. May your will be done.” (Matthew 26:39,42) Do you have an area where this is especially hard for you to pray, because of what it may cost you, or one you love? If so, will you choose today to trust God, to place this situation in His loving hands and begin to walk by faith, confident in His goodness and power and plans, and be expectant for what He will do?

#### PRAYER

*Lord God, You sent Jesus, the Word Who was with You from the beginning, to become flesh among us. Thank You for the living, life-changing Word, for the light it gives, and the ways it changes me. I come to You to be fed by Your Word today, and ask that You cause it to take hold of me and take root in me. I commit myself to You and choose Your will over mine, for Your glory and purposes. Amen.*

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## CHAPTER 10

## FIREWORKS

## 1. Read Ephesians 2.

a. List every description you can find of people *before* they are saved by Jesus. For example: *dead in my transgressions and sins (1)*

b. In verse 4 comes the glorious “*but God*”, a beautiful phrase found throughout Scripture to emphasize His distinction from us and His intervention for us. What qualities of God and Jesus do you find in this chapter? There are many. Remember, these are true of God all the time.

c. From this passage, why are we saved? You may want to mark with an arrow, or some symbol, every place in the Bible you find “in order that”, “so that”, etc. Cite verses.

d. What is our new position in Christ once He has saved us? There are several.

e. What does it mean to you to be a “member of God’s household”?

2. a. A few things happened on July Fourth ‘for the first time’, at least since the author had left her husband. List them. According to Ephesians 2, why do you think she hadn’t done these things, or come to these conclusions, before that night?

b. Who initiated the changes?

## ***CHOOSING HIM* COMPANION STUDY GUIDE**

3. Read 2 Corinthians 4:4,6. If you are an unbeliever, or even if you are a believer, are there areas where you have allowed “the god of this age” to blind you from the light of Christ? From His good path for you? Will you ask God to make His light of truth to shine in your heart to illuminate your thinking, reasoning, decisions, and even your affections and desires?

4. Many places in the Scripture, especially in the accounts of the Israelites being freed from Egyptian slavery, teach the truth that as believers we are free from captivity, free from the power and penalty of sin. What does this mean to you? Think about what slavery and captivity entail, and what is true when you are freed from that. Write some comparisons between slavery and freedom.

5. How can you apply this concept of freedom from slavery to sin in your life? This means freedom from destructive/unproductive habits, fleshly urges, etc. Read Romans 6 and ask God to guide your application of these great truths. What must be appropriated by you through faith and obedience?

6. Do you have a regular discipline of confessing your known sins? If you have a regular prayer time, after praising God for Who He is and filling your mind with Him, spend some time in confession and repentance, using Psalm 139:23–24 and Psalm 19:12–14.

7. If you are at odds with another person, especially with your husband, then—following the author’s example—take time to allow God to reveal *your* sin to you, and then take full responsibility for what you have done. Apply Matthew 5:23–24 and 1 John 1:9.

8. Have you tasted and seen that God is good (Psalm 34:8), and do you know Jesus as your Savior? If so, what evidence is there in your daily life of your walking in fellowship with Him?

#### PRAYER

*My Lord and Savior, Thank You for rescuing me from slavery to sin, for freeing me from captivity to worldly thinking and doing. Please help me to live my new life in You every day, moment by moment relying on Your light to guide me and Your strength to walk worthy of my calling in Christ Jesus. Help me to live cleanly toward You and others. Amen.*

[illegible]

CHAPTER 11

## MARRIAGE OVER

1. What strikes you most about the author's reaction to her husband's rejection of her confession?

2. From Ephesians 1:3–9, what blessings were hers now that she had received God's grace? If you are in Christ, these are yours also!

3. Read 2 Corinthians 5:17–18a.

a. Was this true for the author?

b. Is it true for you?

c. In what areas of your life are you yearning to be “new”, and what will you do about this?

4. Read Galatians 2:20. Memorize it. Think about what it means to be “crucified with Christ”, about the significance of Christ's crucifixion. The Crucifixion was designed and superintended by God the Father; it was excruciatingly painful (the word *ex-cruciate* means literally, ‘out of the cross’); true human death was the result, which means no rights, no breath, no response; it was purposeful. Then think about what came after—glorious resurrection.



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a. Can you say Galatians 2:20 is true for you?

b. What does “living by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me” mean to you?

c. What evidence is there that you are living your life in this way? In other words, what does it look like in your life?

5. Francois Fénelon, the 17<sup>th</sup> century French theologian, longed that “I would have no other desire than to accomplish Thy will.” The author, in describing her new desires to her friend, said, “I couldn’t even separate what I wanted now from what I knew that God wanted. My will was bending to His will.” Jesus, in Gethsemane, aligned His will with His Father’s when He said, “Yet not my will, but thine be done.” David, in Psalm 86:11, asks for “an undivided heart.” For what are you longing that you sense may be *out of* God’s will? Perhaps it has to do with a desired change in your husband, or even a potential husband. Maybe it relates to a child and your will for his/her direction and decisions. It could be a potential move or change for your family that you are resisting. Will you be deliberate now in offering *your* will to God and seeking *His* first, then, by faith, aligning your will with His?

6. Read Romans 12:1–2.

a. What light do these verses shed on this “will-alignment”? From what must we intentionally turn, and what should we seek?

b. How will you apply this today? In what circumstance or desire?

7. From Matthew 6:25–33,

a. What does Jesus say is the one thing we should seek before and instead of anything else?

b. What does He promise when we do so?

c. When has this been true for you, or when will you put this into practice?

8. Read and commit to memory Isaiah 26:3–4. How can your mind be “steadfast,” or “stayed on Thee”? Does this come naturally, or is it a discipline enabled by the Holy Spirit?

9. Peace flooded this once reactive, emotional woman, and her perspective changed when she knew God was in control. Is there an area (or more) where you desire her same confidence, her certain trust in God, and hopeful expectancy for the future? Write down some qualities of God’s in which you can stake your faith, knowing He will not change or fail. Choose to root your expectancy in Him.

#### PRAYER

*Righteous and good Savior, You indeed make us new creatures in You. Thank You. Please identify in my life and heart areas where I am clinging to my will with a closed fist; open my hand and change my desires to choose Yours. Help me to delight in and seek You first, that I might know and trust Your good, pleasing, and perfect will. I want all my expectations to be in You and You alone. Amen.*

## This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

## THREE WORDS AND A TRIP

1. As the author moved through months of desiring to be a godly, Christian wife to her estranged husband, what kindness did God afford her as a glimpse into His working in her husband's life?

2. a. How is God's providence traced through her husband's life to bring his high school Christian teammate back into his life?

b. Have you experienced God's providence in any similar way?

3. Over the previous year and more, describing her husband, the author wrote, "Everyone had advised, 'Don't go back to her.'" Yet one friend spoke hard truth because he cared more about Terry than about being popular, and had "earned the right to have a straight talk with Terry." Read 2 Timothy 4:2-4.

a. Which kind of friend are you to others? One who goes along with feel-good opinion or one who is willing to "correct, rebuke, and encourage"?

b. What kind of friends do you seek out when faced with difficulty? How willing are you to hear truth that is hard and requires action or change on your part?

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4. The author eagerly looked forward to her time alone with God, and made plans and preparation for it. How do you prepare for daily time with Him . . .

a. Spiritually?

b. Practically?

5. In a love relationship, we desire to spend time with our loved one, so we set aside other activities to make time for that person. If you are irregular in spending time with God, what changes need to be made . . .

a. In your heart?

b. In your schedule?

6. Read Isaiah 50:4; 55:1–3a. What benefits from coming to the Lord regularly does Isaiah describe? Are these things you need and want?

7. Read Nehemiah 8:1–13; 9:1–37. This is one of many Bible passages that give a good model for prayer. As you read through it, identify and write phrases/words, and give verses, for **ACTS**:

a. **A**doration/Praise for Attributes of God

b. **C**onfession of specific sins

c. Thanksgiving for what God has done

d. Supplication/Requests

e. What did you learn, and how can you apply any of these to your prayer life?

8. Once the author spent time praising God and confessed her known sins and began to pray, God changed her perspective. The psalmist says, “In Your light, we see light.” (Psalm 36:9).

a. When has your perspective, or desire, or attitude changed as a result of spending time gazing on God in His Word and in prayer?

b. Where do you need an adjustment in your thoughts or emotions? When will you set aside special time with your God to hear and digest His truth?

#### PRAYER

*Father, Thank You for the privilege of prayer, that I can come to You any time and know I have Your full attention. Thank You for how You work through prayer to enlighten, comfort, change, and guide me. Please keep me faithful to my time with You as an unbreakable appointment. Cause the feast You have prepared for me to always satisfy me. Amen.*

[illegible]

## NOT FREE TO DATE, IDOLS, AND EASTER

1. What is true about God, Jesus, and/or the Holy Spirit as our help in temptation in the following verses:

a. Deuteronomy 31:6,8; Joshua 1:9

b. Isaiah 41:10

c. John 16:8,13a

d. John 17:11,15–17

e. Romans 8:31–34

f. 1 Corinthians 10:13

g. Hebrews 4:14–16

h. Hebrews 12:1–3

i. 2 Peter 1:3–4



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2. How are you encouraged by these truths and promises?

3. Read Moses' example in standing firm in Hebrews 11:25–27. How can you apply the principles he did to keep strong when faced with the “pleasures of sin”?

4. What can you do to help others, or have them help you, resist temptation?

a. 1 Chronicles 29:18–19a

b. Colossians 1:9–12

c. Hebrews 3:12–13

d. Hebrews 10:24–25

e. How consistent are you in practicing these? What difference has it made?

5. “I’m not waiting on Terry, I’m waiting on God. I’m waiting to see what God is going to do.” While sounding inert, waiting is actually active in Scriptures. From these verses, what help do you receive about waiting?

a. Psalm 27:14

b. Psalm 40:1

c. Psalm 130:5–6

d. Isaiah 30:18

e. 2 Peter 3:8–9

6. For what are you waiting, and how expectant is that waiting? Is your focus on the object of your waiting, or on God Who controls the whole process and outcome?

7. Many early hymns were written to teach doctrine, as few people had Bibles, and paper and books were scarce. When the disciples asked the Lord Jesus to teach them how to pray, He responded with the succinct Lord's Prayer. Think of a hymn, creed, or prayer that you have memorized, and take time to reflect on each line, absorbing its meaning. What new thought or response did this exercise bring?

#### PRAYER

*Lord Jesus, You alone met the full brunt of temptation without sinning, and through Your victory You have given me Your Spirit to help me say no to sin. Please remind me to fit Your armor on each day so that I may withstand the onslaught of the enemy, who seeks to destroy and discourage. You are my anchor, and I want to hold fast to You, willing to wait as long as You deem necessary to accomplish Your perfect plans for my life. Amen.*

[illegible]

## CHAPTER 14

# LOVE MUST BE TOUGH

1. Are there times when you have needed to call a friend immediately after something happened? Are you such a friend for others?
2. Read Acts 15:12–18,32; 20:32,36–37.
  - a. Name some of the early disciples mentioned here, along with how they encouraged one another.
  - b. How do you help and encourage others in the same way?
3. It has been said, “Go to the throne, not to the phone.” The author tells of growing into the ability to cry out to God instead of calling her friends when in dire need. Are you learning this, too? What do you learn about prayer (note circumstances, requests) from:
  - a. Genesis 24:42–45?
  - b. Numbers 20:16a?
  - c. Joshua 24:5–8?
  - d. Judges 3:9,15?
  - e. Psalm 18:6?

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f. Psalm 34:4?

g. Psalm 107:4–9?

h. Acts 16:25–34?

i. Philippians 4:6–7?

4. What are some promises or attributes of God that are true, that you can count on, that will build your confidence, from these verses on prayer?

5. What do you think caused the author to be able to say, “God’s ways were a mystery, but I accepted them”?

6. The author gives some reasons why she had confidence to accept God’s ways. How do you fare in these, and how can you apply them personally?

a. “I continued to memorize scripture and pray over those long months.”

b. “My faith was strengthened.”

c. “I drank in His presence, knowing that I was secure.”

d. “I was learning to pick His voice out of the crowd of noise and other voices that tried to compete with His.”

7. Are you in a situation where God is calling you to “let go”? Maybe it’s simply to stop nagging (well, that may not be simple), to let go of a desire or a dream, or a longing that your husband will change. Will you hold out your hands to God, in prayer and offering, and allow Him to unfold your fingers from the fist, opening your hand so He is free now to bless you in unimaginable ways? Your guarantee is *Him*, not any result. “I was secure in the hands of the One who made me and loved me and called me by name.”

8. Are you facing a place of hard obedience? How can the truths and admonitions of Colossians 3:1–3 gird you to act?

#### PRAYER

*Father, You are seated on the throne of heaven and earth, and Jesus is seated, victorious, at Your right hand. As You rule in all righteousness and goodness, cause me to trust You in everything, to keep my eyes on You and to come to You first in every need. Give me strength and resolve for a life of long obedience in the same direction—Yours. Amen.*

[illegible]

## CHAPTER 15

## HOME

1. What did the author want to take advantage of when she first moved home?

a. Do you take full advantage of this in your home and marriage?

2. In her prayers of confession, she learned, “I was not the moral custodian of my husband.”

When have you fallen into the trap of thinking you were your husband’s moral custodian, and what does that attitude presuppose?

3. “I needed to be forgiving, if I wanted to be forgiven.” Have you ever reversed this attitude, thinking that the person who offended you needed to forgive you first?

a. From Romans 5:8, how does Jesus refute this mindset?

b. Will you prayerfully choose to forgive anyone you have not, as a deliberate act of your will, and so receive the freedom this brings?

4. “The secret of obedience lies in the will.” Do you agree? How often do you obey when it feels right, but choose your own path when it is too tough or unappealing? What do the following passages reveal about obedience—ability, motive, consequences/blessings— and how does each help you?



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a. Joshua 24:14–24

b. 1 Samuel 15:1–23

c. Psalm 119:34–37

d. Psalm 119:57,67,129

e. John 14:23–24; 1 John 5:3

f. Acts 5:17–33

5. “Feelings follow faith—faith doesn’t follow feelings.” Where have you put feelings before faith and obedience, and when will you choose to reverse this, as an intentional act of faith?

6. The author refuted Bill Gates’s comment that “faith in God would make no difference” with many ways that it had for her. What tangible difference has faith in God, and knowing Jesus, made in your life? Take time to think through this and list as many items as you can, and then thank God.

7. Considering God's providential hand through your life, for what are you "ever grateful" to Him?

8. Read Romans 12:1. The famous evangelist D. L. Moody was influenced by an evangelist named Henry Varley in Dublin in the 1870s. Varley said to him, "Moody, the world has yet to see what God can do with and for and through a man who is fully consecrated to Him." Pray through St. Francis of Assisi's prayer, and offer yourself as a living sacrifice, in each request, to your Lord today, and watch what He will do!

#### PRAYER

*Lord God, Only You know the wonderful plans You have designed for my life. I offer myself to You fully, that I might walk in faithful obedience, loving and forgiving and serving others as You have so graciously done for, and do for me. I long that my life—all of it—bring You glory. Amen.*

[illegible]

# ABOUT THE AUTHORS

## JUANA MIKELS

JUANA MIKELS'S DESIRE IS TO see women's lives changed through the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Juana speaks to women's groups and churches with her story and her seminar on order, home life, and time management for the busy Christian mother. You can find her blog at [www.juanamikels.com](http://www.juanamikels.com) or at [www.choosinghim.com](http://www.choosinghim.com). You can also find her on social media under the profile JuanaMikels.

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I AM SO HONORED TO have Pamela Bunn as my co-writer for the companion study guide to *Choosing Him All Over Again*. Pamela is a godly wife of 34 years, a parent, and a grandparent. She is a former teaching leader and area advisor for BSF International and a current board member. Pamela knows her Bible! So she is who God sent to write nearly every question for you to reflect on and apply in your life concerning faith and marriage.

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