

Dear Bible Study Leader,

There are two ways to lead this study: the easy way and the not-so easy way. Let's start with the easy way!

Low Maintenance Bible Study Plan:

With this method all you need to do is go through the study yourself before class and then just discuss it with the ladies once you get to class. There are two different ways you can discuss it:

1. You can go through the study, lesson by lesson, and for each lesson ask, "What did you think of this lesson?" or "What did you get out of this lesson?"
2. You can go through the chapter and discuss the questions marked with bullet points. These are the questions that will probably generate the most discussion. If you use this method, consider going through any charts or lists in the chapter to see if everyone understood those.

Either of these methods should generate plenty of discussion if you don't have too large of a group. Since most of the study is about things the women deal with every day, they'll have plenty of things to talk about.

Higher (But Not Too High!) Maintenance Bible Study Plan:

Follow the guide I've provided. Or do a combination of going through the book lesson by lesson and add in anything from this guide you think will be helpful. In the guide, I've tried to provide some extra opportunities to practice the renewing of the mind skills.

Leader Preparation

The best way you can prepare to lead this study, besides doing the lessons yourself, is to use the different renewing of the mind tools I talk about in the book to work through your own issues in life. A description of the various renewing of the mind tools can be found on the following pages:

Truth Journaling: Pages 28-31. You can also see a description of a different way to truth journal called "Truth Journaling: the List Method" on my blog. Here's a link to that: <http://beyondthesinnersprayer.wordpress.com/2012/03/27/truth-journaling-the-list-method/>. I also have numerous examples of truth journaling on my old blog at www.ideserveadonut.com. And I have a better step-by-step description of truth journaling in *Taste for Truth: A 30 Day Weight Loss Bible Study*. You can get this description for free on my blog if you don't have the book. Just click on the link to it under the Renewing of the Mind Tools tab.

Scripture Prayers: Page 32. You may want to tell the women in your group about *I Deserve a Donut (And Other Lies That Make You Eat)*, as it has over 150 Bible verses you can use to pray through. If I'm struggling with something, I'll often go to that section of *I Deserve a Donut* and just spend ten or fifteen minutes meditating on the Bible verses and using them to talk to God about my situation. *I Deserve a Donut* is also available as an iPhone app, but if the women buy the app, they should read the introduction for the book on Amazon as that explains how to use the questions better. They should be able to read the intro by clicking on the Look Inside feature on Amazon.

Option Charts: Pages 42-47. I have another description of option charts on my blog. You can find the link to that post under the Renewing of the Mind Tools tab.

Three Questions: Chapter Four. Since truth journaling and option charts are harder to learn, I would spend more time on these. Don't worry if you're not an expert at them by the time you teach the class. Some of the best classes are "learning together" experiences.

Encouragement

I'm so excited that you're teaching this class because it's a Bible study that will help women develop the habit of going to God for help with life. Many women begin to work through difficult issues as they go through this study. I've probably had just as many women tell me they've resolved issues like anger with this study as ones who tell me it's helped them with their eating issues.

In fact one time I taught the study at a church as an emotions study rather than a weight loss study. We just had an additional 15 minutes at the end for those who were trying to lose weight. During that time we shared how we were doing with our eating and discussed anything the women wanted to discuss.

I've also found that this study (and Taste for Truth) often attracts women who don't normally go to Bible studies. Be sure to give the women grace if they don't finish their Bible studies. If they aren't already used to having a daily quiet time, the study may seem overwhelming to do on a daily basis. That's okay. Tell them to just do what they can.

As leaders, our job is to love our class members, pray for them, be an example to them of going to God alongside them for help with our own issues, and to present the material. But that's where our responsibility ends because we can't be the Holy Spirit in anyone's life.

When I first taught this material, I was so excited about what God had done in my own life that I was expecting all the class members to be excited and spend lots of time going to God. Some did, but many didn't! I've learned to lower my expectations, accept women where they're at, and just love and enjoy them.

Any time we can help and encourage each other to go to God for help with problems, we're helping each other grow closer to Him. I'm hoping that's what this Bible study will do for you and your group members.

Blessings on you and your group as you do this study together!

In His Love,
Barb Raveling

P.S. If you need to get in touch with me, you can contact me through the About tab at my blog, barbraveling.com. I'm also working on putting up a weight loss resources page at my blog, which might be helpful to look at if you're teaching this study.

Week One: Introductory Class

There are several different approaches you could take to this first class. I'll provide some ideas and you can use whatever looks good to you. Here are the goals for your first class:

1. To get to know each other.
2. To cover the material in the introduction to *Freedom from Emotional Eating*.
3. Optional: to have the class members decide on the boundaries they'll use and set renewing of the mind goals.

Ideas for Getting to Know Each Other (10-15 minutes)

1. Have each person share her reason for doing the study.
2. Have each person share a little of her weight loss story (if the class is focused on weight loss).
3. Have each person just go around the room and tell a little about herself.
4. Have refreshments after the meeting and have people get to know each other at that time.

Possible Plan for Covering the Material in the Intro (40 - 50 minutes)

Note: The first class is a bit different than the other classes because the women haven't done any Bible studies to discuss yet. I'm including a plan you can use if you want a regular class, but you can also just make this a simple get together and skip the plan. It's up to you. Here's the plan:

1. Ask the class this question: How many of you have lost at least twenty pounds at some point in your life? (Most, if not all, will probably raise their hands.)
 - a. Then ask: How many of you have lost twenty pounds at least twice in your life? (Again, most will raise their hands.)
 - b. Then say something like, "From the looks of all the hands raised, I think we can safely say, 'The problem isn't that we don't know *how* to lose weight, it's that we can't keep it off once we lose it.'" This Bible study is about how to change the way we think about life and food so that we can not only lose weight, but once we've lost it, so we can keep it off.
In order to do that, we'll need to be transformed from the inside out.
2. Let's begin by taking a look at the transformation process. If you have access to YouTube, watch the Skit Guys: God's Chisel on YouTube. Here's the link: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AhfUzodLRvk>. (9 minutes 16 seconds) After it's finished ask them to list some of the messages in the skit.
 - a. We are works of art – even before we're transformed.

- b. God loves us.
 - c. Transformation can be painful. Etc.
3. In the video, we see “God” chiseling away at the guy. Sometimes it’s hard to know what we’re supposed to do when God’s chiseling away at us. Let’s see what Scripture has to say about our part in the transformation process.
 4. As a class, fill in the chart and answer the questions that follow. (I’ll provide a **blank copy of this study on page 5** that you can copy off for everyone if you’d like):

	Our Role	God’s Role
Romans 12:2	<i>Renew our minds</i>	<i>God transforms us.</i>
John 8:31-32	<i>Continue in the Word so we can know the truth.</i>	<i>God sets us free.</i>
John 15:4-5	<i>Abide in Him!</i>	<i>He gives us the fruit. In Galatians 5:22-23, we see that one of the fruits is self-control.</i>
John 17:17	<i>Stay in the Word.</i>	<i>He sanctifies us.</i>
2 Corinthians 10:3-5	<i>We make our thoughts obedient to Jesus Christ.</i>	<i>God tears down the stronghold.</i>

In summary, what is our part in the transformation process?

- Stay in the Word. Renew our minds. Take our thoughts captive. Spend time with God.

What is God’s part?

- He transforms us. Tears down the strongholds. Sets us free.

Why do you think God asks us to be involved in our own transformation when He has the power to speak a word and change us in an instant?

- God uses trials to help us grow and weight loss is a trial. If we go to Him for help, this trial can help us grow closer to Him and more like Him. We might even end up being thankful we struggled with our weight!

5. Could discuss boundaries: “Another thing Barb talks about in the introduction is need for lifelong boundaries.” Ask them to read the material in the introduction on boundaries and also the material on my blog if they want more help with boundaries.
6. Assign them the first chapter for next week.

Note: As time permits, I hope to put other resources you can use to teach this study up on my blog. When I do, I’ll put them up on a Weight Loss Resources tab.

Transformation

Sometimes God transforms us in an instant, either by giving us the gift of self-control or by taking away our taste for a particular sin. An example would be the alcoholic who commits his life to Christ and never has another drink. More often than not, though, transformation is a step-by-step process, and God expects us to be involved in the project.

Look up the following Bible verses and for each verse, try to find the role we play and the role God plays in the transformation process.

	Our Role	God's Role
Romans 12:2		
John 8:31-32		
John 15:4-5		
John 17:17		
2 Corinthians 10:3-5		

In summary, what is our part in the transformation process?

What is God's part?

Why do you think God asks us to be involved in our own transformation when He has the power to speak a word and change us in an instant?

Other Resources

Barb's old blog: www.ideserveadonut.com

Barb's current blog: www.barbraveling.com

I Deserve a Donut (And Other Lies That Make You Eat)

Taste for Truth (A 30 Day Weight Loss Bible Study)

Week Two: Truth

Note: For a general plan of how to lead each week's Bible study, see the first page of this guide. What I'll include here is some of the answers to the questions in the Bible study and additional examples you can use to teach the concepts. If you get too overwhelmed with the material, just go back to the Low Maintenance Plan on the first page!

Spend only 15 to 20 minutes on Day One to Day Three so you have time to practice truth journaling.

1. DAY ONE: Truth

- a. How is Satan described in the following verses: Pg 16
 - John 8:44 – murderer, father of lies
 - Revelations 12:9-10 – deceiver of the world and accuser of the saints.
 - Point out that Satan's main weapons are lies and accusations, which is why we need to be diligent to use truth as a weapon against him.
- b. Why do you think Satan accuses us? Pg. 16
 - Because if we beat ourselves up, we'll feel defeated. Instead of focusing on the truth, which will protect us and change us, we focus on how terrible we are and how we'll never change.

2. DAY TWO: Transformation

- a. Pg. 19 How would you answer those critics of Christianity? **I would consider skipping this question.** (I don't know why I have a dot on it!) It usually leads to a justification of why it's okay for Christians to be like the world, and that's what we're trying to get away from.
- b. The main purpose of this lesson is to show that we're transformed by renewing our minds. So if we want to be transformed, we need to renew our minds! You could ask them about what they thought about the diagrams on page 20 to make sure they understood how our beliefs affect our behavior.
- c. Pg. 20 - Can you think of any examples of people having wrong desires ...
 - Alcoholic: I can handle it (when they want a drink). Thief: They're rich. They don't need this.
- d. Pg. 21 – What are the benefits . . .
 - It will start to permanently change me from the inside out. If you look back at the diagrams on page 20, when we take off the lie, we also take off the desire. When we put on the truth, our desires change. If we don't take off the lie, both desires will keep warring inside of us.

3. DAY THREE: Carrying thoughts captive, strongholds

- a. List some divinely powerful weapons (bottom of 22):
 - Prayer, Scripture memory and prayers, taking thoughts captive to the truth, the renewing of the mind.
- b. List some weapons of the world (top of 23):

- Diets, exercise, boundaries (Note: boundaries are important and necessary but they aren't divine weapons. They don't have the power to change us.)
- c. Just for fun, you could ask if anyone related to the lies on page 24-25.

4. **DAY FOUR:** Truth journaling

On the next page, I've listed some examples from my own journal you can use with the class. These are actual journal entries from my lie-truth charts, so they may sound a little rough.

Write my beliefs on the white board and then ask the class what the truth is for each belief in my example, one sentence at a time. They may come up with different answers. That's okay. It's good to find out what several women would write for the truth – just be careful you correct any truths that go against the Bible.

Not all truths will be biblical truths. Some will just be practical truths. You just have to be sure no truths go against the Scripture. (*God wants me to be happy so He'd want me to eat whatever I want* would be an example of a "truth" that would go against Scripture. *I will feel better if I eat a smaller portion* would be an example of a practical truth.)

If you decide to pass these out to the class as examples, you might want to at least try having the class brainstorm truths for one entry before you pass them out. The more practice you can give your class members coming up with truth, the better.

You may want to print out a couple of blank lie-truth charts (pg. 169) to give the class. They can also be downloaded from www.truthwaypress.com under the samples tab. The ones on the website are a little bigger than the ones in the book. Tell the class members that they could use these charts or buy a journal to write in.

5. **DAY Five: Scripture**

- a. You can skip this lesson if you don't have time, as it's pretty self-explanatory. The main thing to point out is that Jesus attacked Satan's lies with Scripture. Encourage them to memorize and pray Scripture,

Examples for Truth Journaling

Example #1:

Situation: Faced with a cinnamon roll when I was on a diet and didn't have enough points to eat it.

Beliefs: 1. That would taste so good. 2. It doesn't matter that I'm on a diet. 3. I'll just have it. 4. It's worth it for the frosting.

Truths: 1. True. 2. It doesn't matter if I don't want to lose weight. But I do want to lose weight, so it matters! It will take three weeks to lose three pounds if I'm diligent. It will take three *years* of trying and failing if I'm not diligent. Do I really want to waste three years of my life trying to lose weight? I think not! 3. No I won't. 4. It's not worth it for

the frosting. I can have frosting later when I can legitimately have it and still stay within my boundaries.

Example #2:

Situation: I had broken my boundaries several times during the day and was very discouraged. On this day, I waited until after I'd broken my boundaries several times, so I had a lot more lies to deal with.

Beliefs: 1. I can't stick to this. 2. It's too hard. 3. I probably gained a bunch of weight yesterday. 4. I will never be able to lose more and will probably gain back all the weight I've already lost. 5. I have no will power. 6. This is *too hard*.

Truths: 1. I can't, but God can. He *will* use the truth to set me free. I must try to journal as soon as possible after breaking my boundaries. 2. Yes it's very hard, but God can do hard things in me. 3. I actually don't think I ate enough to gain, but I will probably have a water weight gain. 4. This isn't true. If I continue to journal, God will use the truth to set me free, and I will lose more. I have been disciplined to journal so there is much hope. 5. This is a stronghold, so willpower is irrelevant. I need to get rid of the lies. 6. This is great discipline for me. I will grow through this struggle.

Other Examples:

You could give them some other situations and ask them what they would be thinking in that situation – have them come up with the beliefs, write them on the board as they say them (3-5 beliefs should be enough), and then go through them one by one to state the truth.

Here are some possible examples: 1) You're at Costco and you feel like having the samples. 2) You step on the scale after a week of following your boundaries, and you gained a pound. 3) You had a really bad day and you just want to eat.

Week Three: Trials

When I taught this class, rather than going through the questions in the book, I asked the questions below as they give an overview to the chapter. I went through them pretty quickly to leave time to talk about the Mary and Bill example. Although today's lesson looks long, I was able to cover it with my class in just a little over an hour. (But you'll have to keep the discussion moving.)

1. Let's start our time together with an overview of this week's lesson on trials. What does the Bible say about trials? (James 1:2-4 – they answered this at bottom of 37.)
 - We should count them as joy. God uses them to help us grow.
2. How does this contrast with what our culture say about trials?
 - The culture says trials are bad. We need to get rid of them so we can have great lives.
3. On pg. 36 we looked at some of the things God wanted to teach the Israelites through their trial in the desert. What were some of those things?
 - To humble them and see if they were now prepared to obey.
 - To teach them all they need is God, to teach them to depend on Him.
 - He wanted to discipline them so He could train the sin of Egypt out of them.
 - So they wouldn't forget God once everything started going well.
 - So they would know that everything they have is from God.
 - To humble them and test them, to do good to them in the end.
 - So they would know that every good thing they have is from God.
4. Did all of the Israelites who wandered in the desert for forty years learn the lessons God wanted to teach them? Why not?
 - No – some of them spent those forty years complaining.
5. What would they have had to do if they wanted the trial in the desert to transform them?
 - Go to God for help with their trials. (Hebrews 12:11)
6. So here's the question: When we have trials, do we always go right to God so He can teach us what He wants us to learn through the trial, or are we often like the Israelites?
 - The women should all say they're often like the Israelites here, unless you have a particularly spiritual Bible study group!
7. What kinds of things do we do instead of going to God for trials?
 - Eat, watch TV, mope, surf the internet, read, exercise, call a friend, etc.
8. What will we need to do if we want to grow through our trials?
 - Go to God. Search His Word for help, etc.
 - Point out that one of the best ways to grow through trials is to take the time to renew our minds. "Barb shows us one way to do this on Day 3 of the study. Let's turn to that on page 41."

9. What did you think of Mary and Bill? Anyone thoroughly annoyed with the Mary and Bill example?
- There will probably be a lot of heads nodding here and laughter. This example goes against the culture and it will bother some people. Recognize that yes, this is bothersome!
 - Before you discuss it much, do the truth journaling example in the next question. But just to prepare yourself, here is the issue that will upset people: They'll be annoyed that Mary has to do all the changing because it's not fair. Here's the truth they'll need to be able to understand the example and to live victoriously in their own relationship struggles: **Mary has no control over Bill** – she's not capable of changing him even though she'd like to, just as *we can't change the people who bug us*.
 - Because we live in a culture that says we can do anything we set our minds to, someone in your class will probably say, "You just need to tell Bill your needs. He needs to see that you need help."
 - The issue here is that Mary has already done that to no avail. Bill's not willing to change. Because of that, her best option is to love, submit, and forgive. Continuing to nag him will only make her more upset.
10. Try a truth journaling example for Mary. Read the situation on page 41, and then ask each woman to write what they would be thinking on their own piece of paper. While they're doing that, write this on the whiteboard:

Bill is such a jerk. All he ever does is watch TV. I should have married Bob. I bet he helps around the house. I shouldn't have to put up with this.

- When the women are through writing their entries, show them what you wrote. Tell them that each of us will have slightly different entries, and that the beauty of truth journaling is that God can use it to speak directly into each of our lives as we bring each of *our* thoughts captive to Him.
- Remind them how to truth journal. First you number each sentence, and then you look at each sentence and write down the sentence just for that particular truth.
- Go through the sentences as a class one at a time. For example, you might say, "Let's look at this first sentence. Is it true that Bill's a jerk?" When the class says no, ask them what a true statement would be. Remind them that we'll find the truth in the Bible. Tell them that if they're not sure, try to think, what would Jesus say about this sentence. Would He agree that Bill is a jerk?
- Here is how I might truth journal this if I were Mary:

Beliefs: 1. Bill is such a jerk. 2. All he ever does is watch TV. 3. I should have married Bob. 4. I bet he helps around the house. 5. I shouldn't have to put up with this.

Truths

1. Bill is a wonderful child of God (or creation of God, depending on whether or not he's a Christian) who has a sin problem that spills over and hurts me. (Make sure you include both parts of that sentence. We recognize that he's a beautiful creation but he's also a sinner and that sin is bound to affect us.)
 2. Although he watches a fair amount of TV, he also works and mows the lawn every weekend. (This of course would be different for each person, but the bottom line is he doesn't watch TV 100% of the time. It's important to recognize that.)
 3. Some women would just put True if they were journaling this. You could also put this: Bob might have helped around the house, but he would have had other bad habits that would have been just as annoying.
 4. We wouldn't know if this is true unless we talk to Bob's wife. (I suppose we could call Bob's wife and find out, but that might not be helpful if we're trying to focus on the good in Bill.)
 5. While it's true that I shouldn't have to do all the housework myself, the fact is that Bob won't help. So what I *should* do is go to God so He can use this trial to help me grow. Only through Him will I be able to love Bill sacrificially and give him grace. (This will be your most controversial discussion because the women will get stuck on the idea that Bill should help. This is where you'll have the opportunity to remind them you can't control other people.)
11. Look at the question on the bottom of page 45: What can Mary learn from the experience?
- Longsuffering, patience, humility, gentleness, love, joy, peace, compassion, how to give grace when it's undeserved.
12. Look at the question on the top of page 46: What if she doesn't go to God for help?
- Bitterness, weight gain, depression, having kids who have to watch them fight and yell at each other, a broken relationship with Bill, eventual divorce (remember these are all just possibilities), her bitterness could also turn her into a negative person and spill into other relationships.
13. Option Charts
- Since there is an example of the option chart in the book, I wouldn't spend much time on it this week. I'll provide you with another example to use in class in a later lesson. You may want to point out option 7, though, on pg. 44. Tell the women that, although they can't change Bill, they can work to make their lives the best possible life within the context of reality (reality being a life where Bill isn't contributing to the workload). That could be hiring help, having the kids share the work, lowering her standards, getting rid of things so there isn't as much work, buying a smaller house, etc.

Optional: Could finish up the class by asking them to take out a sheet of paper and write down a trial they're currently going through, then what God could teach them through the trial, and what might happen if they turn to their coping techniques. Also, ask them to list what coping techniques they're currently using to deal with the trial.

Optional: On my blog I have an option chart example for weight loss (look for the 4/24/14 post – it may also be listed under option charts on the renewing of the mind tab). You could print that out to go over if you have time at the end of the class, but my guess is that you won't have time!

Week Four: Idolatry

Discuss the book with the following outline.

Day One:

Go over the characteristics of idolatry to make sure everyone got them. (143)

1. We put it before God.
 2. We worship it.
 3. We turn to it for deliverance.
 4. We sacrifice to it.
 5. It's hard to give up.
-
1. Pg. 56 - Why do you think the Israelites felt the need to make idols when they had seen the mighty works of God and had experienced His provision for them?
 - They were scared. They weren't trusting in God; they were trusting in Moses. When Moses disappeared, they needed an idol.
 2. Why might we make an idol of food when we know God is much more able to satisfy us and help us?
 3. Pg. 56 - Can you think of any ways in which you have worshipped food or turned to it for deliverance
 4. Pg. 57 - What are the good things (revenues) emotional eating brings to our lives?
 - Immediate relief, a bright spot in a rough day, etc.
 5. Pg. 57 - What are the bad things (costs) emotional eating brings to our lives?
 - Extra weight, unorganized house and life, immaturity because we go to food rather than God for help with problems, health problems, etc.

Day Two: Skip Day Two unless someone wants to comment.

Day Three:

Go over the Negative Consequences of Idolatry to make sure everyone got them: (I added an extra one.)

1. We miss out on God's love and faithfulness to equip us.
2. We miss out on the blessing of doing His will.
3. We often get disciplined.
4. It hurts our relationship with God because we're going to our idol instead of to God.
5. It keeps us from learning the lessons God wants to teach us and our character suffers.
6. It leads to addiction.
7. Causes us to sacrifice things we don't want to sacrifice.

Let's look at the story of Jonah.

1. What do you think Jonah's idol was?
 - Could have been fairness (the Ninevites didn't deserve God's grace), comfort (he might not have wanted to look like a fool when God didn't destroy them), etc.
2. What lesson did Jonah learn in the middle of the book?
 - That it's better to do what God wants you to do.
3. Did that lesson change his life for good?
 - No, he was mad by the end of the book.
4. Sometimes God transforms people in an instant – take for example the drug user who becomes a Christian and immediately loses his taste for drugs – but more often He *doesn't* change us in an instant. Emotional eating is a good example. Why do you suppose God doesn't just take the desire to eat away from us?
 - I think if He did that all the time, we'd never grow, we'd never have to rely on Him, and we might get into trouble because we wouldn't be strong enough to live with our blessings and still follow Him.
5. P. 63 - Does God's way seem too hard sometimes?
6. Do you think a parent's ways seem too hard to a toddler sometimes?
7. Why do we discipline our children and why does God discipline us?
8. What could God teach us through the trial of having to deal with our eating issues over and over again?
 - To rely on Him, to be close to Him, to be willing to give up all things, including food, to be compassionate towards others with compulsive habits, to rejoice in all things, to have self-control.
9. What can we be thankful for?
 - All of the above in question #8 – and that God loves us and wants to help us and understands what we're going through.

Day Four:

1. Pg. 66 - Look at Hebrews 12:7. Why do we endure hardship?
2. Pg. 66 - Do we have to endure hardship in this day and age? Explain.
 - Not always – often we can escape it with mindless entertainment and food or just by withdrawing from things.
3. Pg. 66 - Can you think of any areas of your life where the idolatry of food has hurt your character development?
 - It does for me whenever I turn to food rather than God when I'm stuck in a trial.
4. We've talked about boundaries a lot in this study. Thinking back over all God has taught you since the beginning of the study, how do boundaries make your life better?

Day Five:

1. Pg. 69 - Do you think that the idol of looks has a negative impact on our problem with food? Why or why not?
 - Yes – because whenever we eat too much we're so upset about how it will affect our weight that we panic and eat in despair.
2. Go over the chart to see how they filled it out.

World	• God •
I need to wake up early enough to exercise and make myself look good.	I need to wake up early enough to spend time with God so my insides look good.
I must look perfect.	God created me - I'm His work of art. Beautifully and wonderfully made. I don't need to be skinny to be acceptable.
I need to be skinny to be beautiful.	If God says I'm acceptable, then no one else has a right to tell me I'm not! In fact, it's an affront to the Living God, King of the Universe, to say that I have to live up to the standards of Hollywood.
If only I were skinny, then I would be happy.	If skinny could make you happy, then all the skinny people in the world would be happy. Also, if skinny is an idol for me, I'll never be skinny enough to satisfy me.
Looks are everything.	God is everything – and He says character is far more important than looks.

That's about it for this chapter. You might also want to point out that if any of the women have *I Deserve a Donut*, the greed/lust questions and Bible verses are good ones to use for idolatry.

Week Five: Worry

Go through the discussion questions in the chapter. Then use the following examples to practice the renewing of the mind techniques in class.

- a. **Praying with Thanksgiving:** Praying with thanksgiving is basically just a conversation with God. First you tell Him what your worries are and ask Him what you'd like Him to do (that's the prayer and supplication part) – then you start thanking Him. Thank Him for who He is, for what He's done, and for what He's about to do – even if you're not going to like it.
- This is actually what changed me more than anything with worry. The key is to focus on who God is and how you can be thankful for Him even if your situation in life doesn't generate a lot of thanksgiving.
 - The women in the class will tend to focus on the situation: For example, let's say the trial is a son or daughter who is going astray. They'll tend to come up with things like this to be thankful for: at least the other kids are still following God, at least this kid is only drinking and not taking drugs, etc.
 - While these are definitely things to be thankful for, try to bring up things that have to do with God: For example, that God loves this kid more than I do and He wants him to come back even more than I do, that God's more capable than I am to bring circumstances into this kid's life to change him, that God is enough even if the kid never does change, that God loves me and is enough to fill me up in every way and comfort me when life is going wrong, that God can bring good thing out of this situation – both in my life and in the kid's life, etc.
 - The goal is to move away from “I can only be happy if *this* happens” towards “life is about God and I'm willing to give everything up for Him – even if what I have to give up seems completely unacceptable.”
 - I have included a handout on page 17 of this leader's guide that you can give your class if they need ideas of what to be thankful for.
 - Here is an example from my blog: <http://barbraveling.com/2012/12/17/how-to-pray-scripture-to-break-free-from-habits-and-emotions/> - you can find this by clicking on the Scripture Prayers link at the Renewing of the Mind Tools tab.
 - **Do this exercise with the class. Ask them, “What can we be thankful for in the following situations?” and have the class brainstorm ideas.**
- a. If you're having financial difficulties:
- That God knows your needs, that you won't go bankrupt unless God allows it and that if He allows it He can use it for good in your life, that God sees the big picture, that life is about eternity and not about time on

earth, that even if you starve to death because you have no money (which is highly unlikely) you will go to heaven and that will be a good thing, that this will be a perfect opportunity to grow in your character.

- b. If people you love are having health problems:
 - That God loves them even more than you do, that He wants them to love Him even more than you do – so if they aren't saved, He'll know what the best way is to reach them and He'll be working towards that purpose (Note: the unacceptable you'd have to accept in this situation is that they might ultimately choose to reject God - you would then need to hold their salvation with open hands and be willing to give that up to God.), that God can use their health problems to help both them and you mature, that life is about God – not living long years in perfect health – and that if they're Christians death is a good thing, that God is in control.
 - c. Note: You might want to point out that praying with thanksgiving is more than just venting to God and trying to get Him to do what you want Him to do. It's a way of bringing yourself to God to remember that life is about Him – not about making sure life turns out the way you want it to turn out.
- b. Three Questions:** Do I need to change the way I think? Do I need to act? Do I need to submit? Try these questions out with the following example:

Elizabeth has been married for 12 years. Several of her friends have gone through messy divorces and Elizabeth has been worrying that one day she'll come home to a note from her husband saying he wants a divorce. She doesn't want to be a worrier so she's going to use the three questions to work through her worry.

Ask your class how they would answer the following questions if they were Elizabeth.

- **Do you need to change the way you think?**
 - Yes. Elizabeth is probably seeing this from a “I can only be happy if I'm married” perspective. In reality, if her husband were to leave her, God could fill her up. Yes, it would be painful, but He could use even that for good in her life.
- **Do you need to act?**
 - Ask for suggestions on what Elizabeth could do to help prevent this: Try to plan activities together, work on her faults so she is enjoyable to be around (I'm not suggesting her husband has a right to leave her if Elizabeth has faults), pray for her husband and their marriage, pray through 1 Corinthians 13 and Colossians before she spends time with him, etc.
- **Do you need to submit?**

- In order to break free from her worry, she'll have to accept the possibility that her husband might have an affair and trust God that if He allows it to happen, He'll be able to use it for her good if she goes to Him and allows herself to be trained by the trial.

c. **Option Charts:** Here's an example you can use to do an option chart on the board. You may want to ask them to try it on their own first. If you do this, read the class the problem and hand out the blank chart on page 16. Ask them to fill in the chart as if they were Melody. If they need an example, they can look at page 44 in the book. Tell them to be sure to include things *they* normally do when they're in situations like these.

Problem: Melody is worried about a conversation she had with a friend the other day. She said something she shouldn't have said and is afraid the friend is mad at her. How would you fill out the chart if you were Melody?

Options	Relationship with God	Having Your Friend Not be Mad At You	Happiness
To not have said the remark in the first place.	NOT	AN OPTION!!	!!!!!!!
Avoid your friend since she probably doesn't want to be friends with you anymore anyway.	↓	↓	↓
Keep dwelling on the fact that you shouldn't have said it and worry that your friend is mad at you.	↓	↓	↓
Justify the remark to your friend. Tell her why you had a right to say it.	↓	↓	↓
Go get a big bowl of ice cream and try to forget about it.	↓	↓ (Although, maybe if you invite your friend to eat the ice cream with you she might be happy!)	↑↓
Accept, Love, and Submit. Accept the fact that you can't change what you said and you can't force your friend to forgive you. Love your friend. Pray for her. Talk it over with her. Apologize to her. Submit to God – ask Him for forgiveness if you had a sinful heart attitude towards your friend or if you sinned with your actions. Then be content with whatever happens.	↑	? probably ↑	↑

Option Charts

Problem: Melody is worried about a conversation she had with a friend the other day. She said something she shouldn't have said and is afraid the friend is mad at her. How would you fill out the chart if you were Melody?

Options	Relationship with God	Having your friend Not be mad at you	Happiness

Note on option charts: If you're making your own chart, always include one column that says "relationship with God." The other columns will change depending on what you want to happen (in this case you want your friend not to be mad at you.) In the third column you put what is important to you. For many it will be happiness. For others it will be comfort. For some it will be having people like you. Often this column will be the thing you tend to live for other than God.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:6-7

Things to be Thankful for

1. All God has done for us in the past. Psalm 77:11-15
2. His compassion and understanding. Matthew 9:36, Hebrews 2:17,18, 4:15-16
3. His power. Psalm 73:26, Isaiah 44:6-8, 1 John 4:4
4. His presence. Psalm 34:18, 46:1-3,7, Isaiah 43:2-7, John 14:16-19, Hebrews 13:5
5. His Word. Psalm 119
6. That He can stop bad things from happening if He wants to. Jeremiah 32:27
7. That when He does allow bad things to happen, He always has a plan for redemption. Hebrews 12:10-11, James 1:2-4, 12, 1 Peter 5:9-10
8. That our suffering won't last forever. Psalm 30:5, Psalm 71:20, Jeremiah 31:13,17
9. That we can do all things through Him who strengthens us. Psalm 18:28-29, Philippians 4:13
10. That God is good even when life isn't. Psalm 31:19, 34:8, 36:5-9, 59:16-17
11. That even suffering can be good. Philippians 3:8-12, 1 Peter 3:13-17, 4:1-2
12. That life is about God, not about creating the perfect life. Philippians 1:21,3:7-8, 4:11-12, James 1:17
13. That God will take care of us. Psalm 73:23-24, Isaiah 41:17-18, Lamentations 3:22-25, Philippians 4:19
14. That He loves our loved ones more than we do and yearns to bring them back if they've strayed. Jeremiah 31:3, 20, 32:37-42 Psalm 78:32-39, Hosea 11, 2 Peter 3:9
15. That He can bring things into their lives to draw them back. Jeremiah 32:37-42, Ephesians 3:20-21
16. That we can make a difference through prayer. Jeremiah 29:11-14, James 5:16

Week Six: Discontentment and Boredom

Introduction:

Let's begin by looking at the question: *What do we need to be happy?*

- a. **How would the culture answer that question?** (Make a list on the board like the one I made below and fill in their responses under the world column as they say them.)
- b. **How would the Bible answer that question?**
 - Note: You're looking for the answer "God" so after you ask, *How would the Bible answer that question?* say, *If life is about God, what do I need to be happy?*

World	Bible
Great husband Great job Great kids Great house Great lifestyle	God

So when we renew our mind about situations that make us discontent, the first thing we need to do is remind ourselves that the purpose of life is to love God and others, not to create the perfect lifestyle so we can be happy.

Is it still okay to do practical things to make your life more fun?

- Yes. We just have to be careful not to make those fun things more important than God wants us to make them.

Let's begin with a renewing of the mind example and then we'll take a look at this week's lesson.

Example:

Rebecca just retired from her job and has far too much time on her hands. She's not a hobby person, doesn't have enough money to travel, and hasn't made a lot of friends outside of work. She had always envisioned retirement as a wonderful time to travel and enjoy life, but so far its not living up to her expectations. She spends her days bored, lonely, and discontent.

Ask the class how they would answer the three questions on page 71 if they were Rebecca. You may want to write the questions on the board so everyone can see them.

Here's an example of how you could answer the questions.

Does Rebecca need to change the way she thinks?

With this question we're always comparing what the Bible says with what the culture says. For example, the culture sees retirement as a time to focus on pleasure, so our natural reaction would be to see what kind of fun things we could fill Rebecca's life with. The Bible says that life is about loving God and others, though. From a biblical perspective, this is how we might answer the question:

Yes. Rebecca is thinking life can't be fun if she can't travel. She's also probably thinking she has a right to a fun retirement after working all those years. Biblically speaking, though, life is about loving God and others. Rebecca doesn't need money to love God and others. She will be more content if she changes her expectations and goals for life.

Does Rebecca need to act?

Yes! Rebecca needs to find some people to love. She could look for volunteer activities in her community and at her church. There are bound to be all kinds of people in her town that would love to have Rebecca's help.

She could also put a little more effort into looking for some fun activities, take the risk to ask potential friends to do things with her, and get involved in a Bible study. She could also look for part-time work if she wanted and earn some trip money.

Plus she would have lots of time to spend with God, both in His Word, in prayer, and in the renewing of the mind.

Does Rebecca need to submit?

Yes. She needs to accept the fact that she doesn't have as much money saved as she'd like and not waste negative energy wishing for a different bank account. She also needs to submit to God's perspective – that life is about loving God and others, not making sure she has a fun life.

Lesson

Go through the discussion questions in this week's chapter or just go through the book and ask the class members what they learned from each lesson.

Week Seven: Anger

Note: This is one of the most common emotions women struggle with, but many women don't realize they struggle with it until they go through a study like this. Try to steer the conversation away from specific gripes the women have so it doesn't turn into a "knock the annoying people in our lives" session. You may also want to avoid the "is anger a sin discussion" as it's usually not fruitful. The class is more helpful when the focus is on "how to get rid of our anger" and "how to love well" rather than "I have a right to be angry in this situation" or "it's righteous anger."

1. Discuss the lessons in the book.
2. Ask the following question to the class and see what answers they come up with:
What can we do when another person's actions are negatively affecting us?

Try to gently correct any answers that wouldn't go along with Scripture (you probably won't get any of these). Then include any of the ideas below that no one else mentions.

1. We can pray for them,
2. We can talk to them (but at some point that may become pointless).
 - a. How will you know if talking is helpful?
 - The person will be willing to talk, willing to change, wanting to be all God wants him or her to be.
3. We can set up boundaries that we have control over.
 - a. Example of a boundary you have control over: I'll drive separately if you're not ready on time. I'll leave the room every time you yell at me. (You would have to talk to God and see what's best – if your boundary is helpful or not.)
 - b. Example of a boundary you have no control over: We need to talk about this every time you do something that hurts me. We need to go on a date once a week so we keep our relationship strong.
 - The other person has to want to change. If he doesn't want to change, he'll either refuse to have the talk or a date, or he'll acquiesce with his behavior but not with his heart so you'll still be mad.
4. We can compensate in other areas of our lives
 - a. Work on making our walks with God so vibrant it won't matter if the world isn't doing what we want them to do.
 - b. Work on a submissive spirit.
 - c. Think about practical ways to make life better. (If we make this our only solution, though, we'll be unhappy because we'll never be able to make life good enough to compensate.)

Optional Exercise if Time

1. Go through the anger questions in I Deserve a Donut with an example. You can copy them off for each person in the class if not everyone has the book (which they probably won't).

2. Have everyone take one Bible passage, then go around the room and read them, making a list of how God wants us to respond to the sins and weaknesses we see in others.
 - a. Matthew 5:43-44 Love them and pray for them.
 - b. Luke 6:37-38 Don't judge them or condemn them. Give to them.
 - c. Luke 6:41-42 Work on your own sin before you start working on theirs?
 - Why do you think Jesus tells them to work on their own sin before they start working on the sins of others? (Because if we're holding onto our own sins of anger, condemnation, and judgment, we won't be able to help them with theirs. We won't have the right motives or heart.)
 - d. Romans 15:1, 7 Accept their weaknesses
 - Does accepting their weaknesses mean that you have to let them do whatever they want to you? (No, but it does mean you have to submit to the fact that they have these weaknesses and that you need to love them and accept them in spite of their weaknesses)
 - e. 1 Corinthians 13:5 He doesn't want us to dwell on their faults or think only of our own needs
 - Does loving someone mean that you always do what they want you to do?
 - What does it mean? (You always do what God wants you to do. Not what will make you happy and not what will make them happy, but what will make God happy.)
 - f. Ephesians 4:32 Be tender-hearted and kind; forgive them just as Christ has forgiven you.
 - g. Colossians 3:12-13 Be compassionate, humble, patient, gentle, bear with them
 - h. 1 Peter 1:22 Purify your souls so you can love them from the heart.
 - Can you love them from the heart if you don't take the time to purify your soul?
 - Does God expect us to work on loving the brethren?
 - i. Galatians 6:1
 - Who is supposed to talk to the brother who is sinning?
 - How are they supposed to talk to him?
 - j. Is being a Christian difficult even in countries where Christians aren't persecuted?
 - Yes – if nothing else it's hard to let go of anger and love people who bug us!

Week Eight: Stress and Anxiety

There's a lot to discuss in this week's material. I would pretty much follow the book – I've recorded the material I would focus on if I were teaching the class.

Day One:

1. Bottom of pg. 124: Why did Jesus tell the guy he had to sell everything to follow Him? Does He ask the same of us?
 - I think He asks us to hold all things with open hands, willing to make the sacrifice. (Matthew 16:24-26, Luke 14:26)
2. Pg. 125: Why did Jesus say it's more difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom of heaven than the poor?
 - I think it's because we have so many things that are hard to give up.
3. Read Matthew 10:35-39: Do you think adding God to your life is acceptable or do you need to make Him your life? What would making Him your life look like?
 - This is a difficult lesson because passive Christianity is so acceptable in our culture. I don't think it's acceptable in the Bible, though. It's a fine line to walk. Yes, life needs to be about God, but that doesn't happen in an instant. The question is, what road are you on? The Narrow road or the wide road? (Matthew 7:13-15) Are you working on giving up everything to follow Him, including your sins and idols, or are you merely adding God as a nice little addition to your life?
 - The first chapter in Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, covers this brilliantly. Here are a few highlights:

“(Martin) Luther had said that grace alone can save; his followers took up his doctrine and repeated it word for word. But they left out its invariable corollary, the obligation of discipleship.”

“The justification of the sinner in the world degenerated into the justification of sin and the world. Costly grace was turned into cheap grace without discipleship.”

“(Because of cheap grace) I can therefore cling to my bourgeois secular existence, and remain as I was before, but with the added assurance that the grace of God will cover me. It is under the influence of this kind of “grace” that the world has been made “Christian” but at the cost of secularizing the Christian religion as never before. . . . The Christian life comes to mean nothing more than living in the world and as the world, in being no different from the world, in fact, in being prohibited from being different from the world for the sake of grace. The upshot of it all is that my only duty as a Christian is to leave the world for an hour or so on a Sunday morning and go to church to be assured that my sins are all forgiven. I need no longer try to follow Christ, for cheap grace, the bitterest foe of discipleship, which true discipleship must loathe and detest, has freed me from that.”

And perhaps the quote that describes it best: “The only man who has the right to say that he is justified by grace alone is the man who has left all to follow Christ. Such a man knows that the call to discipleship is a gift of grace, and that the call is inseparable from the grace. But those who try to use this grace as a dispensation from following Christ are simply deceiving themselves.”

4. What kinds of things do you think Jesus would ask *us* to give up if He were coming to us rather than to the rich guy?

Day Two:

1. What were the reasons to spend time with God? (I would also add: to enjoy Him)
 - a. To develop intimacy with Him, to combat the lies of Satan, to keep Him first in our lives, to mature us.
2. Pg. 127: Go over those two questions.
3. Pg. 115: Which seed do you think most represents the busy lifestyle? What happens to it?
4. Top of pg. 129 What keeps us from spending time with God?
5. Pg. 129 – What lies do we believe that keep us from spending time with Him?
 - a. If it looks like you’ll have time, write each of these lies up on the board and then ask the class what the truth is for each lie. This is a type of truth journaling. Suggest that they could truth journal before they have their quiet times if they don’t want to have their quiet times. Examples of lies: I’ll do it later, God doesn’t care, This isn’t important. (Truth: 95% of the time I won’t do it later – if I want to get it done, I better do it now, God loves me and wants to spend time with me, It’s not important if I don’t want to grow or have an intimate relationship with God – it’s extremely important if I do want those things.)
 - b. I also have question and Bible verses in the back of *Taste for Truth* that people can use if they don’t feel like having their quiet times or renewing their mind. Whenever you’re helping with these things, always remember to be loving and accepting rather than critical and condemning. Also, accept that people will change at their own speed. Our job is to just present the truth and pray for class members.

Day Three:

1. Discuss Mary and Martha: (You could either just discuss the questions on pages 130-132, or give a general overview with the following questions.)
 - a. Why was Martha stressed out in this passage? (getting everything ready for dinner and Mary not helping)
 - b. Can’t you sympathize with Martha? Wouldn’t it have bugged you if you had all this work to do and Mary was just sitting there?
 - c. Why do you suppose Jesus didn’t make Mary help? Isn’t that what we would have done in a parenting situation?
2. I think He didn’t make Mary help for a couple of reasons. First, because Mary was doing what she should have been doing, making God (Jesus) a priority.

3. And second because Martha was making dinner *and* fairness more important than Jesus wanted her to make them.
 - i. If Jesus had solved her problem for her (either by making dinner magically appear or by telling Mary to help), Martha wouldn't have had an opportunity to grow.
 - ii. God often allows us to stay in the trial so we learn what He wants to teach us through that trial.
 - iii. If Martha had just gone off and made the meal with a bad attitude, would she have learned the lesson Jesus wanted her to learn? (No, because she wouldn't be renewing her mind and seeing the situation from His point of view.)
4. If Martha had asked Jesus, *how do I stop being so stressed out?*, what do you think Jesus would have replied? (Put me first, Martha, and give up the idea that dinner has to be at a set time and that it has to be perfect, and then you won't be so stressed.)

Day Four:

Perfectionism –

1. Pg. 133 - In what ways does perfectionism add stress to your life?
2. Pg. 133 – Does perfectionism ever hurt our relationship with God or others? Explain.
3. Pg. 134 - How would your life improve if you were able to stop being a perfectionist?

Procrastination

- Ask the same questions about procrastination that you asked about perfectionism.

Day Five:

If time, ask questions on page 138 and 139:

1. Pg. 138 - Is there anything you can do better to reduce the stress in your life?
2. Pg. 138 - Is there any area of your life that might be enhanced by relaxing your standards?
3. Pg. 139 - Why is a busy life held in high regard in our culture? (126)
 - I think we see it as a sign that we're important. But God never says in the Bible, "As long as you have a busy life, you're important."
4. Pg. 139 - How do you think God would feel about the pace we live our lives? Give biblical support, if possible.
 - The Mary and Martha story implies that we need to slow down enough to make time with Him a priority – that and all the verses in the Bible that talk about putting effort into our relationship with Him (Jeremiah 29:13, for example). It would be one thing if we were slaves, prevented by our masters from spending time with God, or if we honestly have to work all day just to put food on the table and a roof over our heads. But the vast majority (if not all) of us aren't in that position. We have things we can eliminate to make

God a priority. Sometimes we just have to make it a priority For example, one of my friends made a boundary that she has to have an hour with God before she goes to work. She has come to love and rely on that time with God. A stay-at-home mom with lots of kids might have to train the kids to give her quiet time each day or come up with other creative ways to find it.

5. Pg. 139 - In what ways does the pace at which you live your life (whether it's too fast or too slow) keep you from spending time with God and ministering to others?
6. Pg. 140 - If it's not possible to have it all, etc. How would God want us to decide what activities stay or go? (128)
7. Pg. 142 – See if anyone wants to share the answer to this question: If you could change one thing about your life to make it less stressful, what would it be?

Week Nine: Depression, Loneliness, and Celebration

Discuss the book with the following outline.

Day One: The Past

1. The first thing Barb talks about in this chapter is regretting the past. Why do we regret the things we did in the past?
2. Pg. 143 - God is good all the time - - How would believing these words make a difference in our attitudes if we were longing for the past?
 - Because if God is good all the time, He's good even when life is falling apart. And His purpose is to bring good things out of the bad things that happens to us. (Romans 8:28)
3. Pg. 144 - Why do you think longing for the past would lead to depression?
 - Because it can't be changed. When we keep dwelling on things that can't be changed it reinforces the idea that life can't be good in our current circumstances. This makes us feel hopeless and depressed.
4. Pg. 144 - How would being thankful help to lift your depression?
 - It sets my mind to thinking on good things, not bad, and on how good God is, not how crummy life is.
5. Pg. 144 – Ask if anyone tried thanking God for 10 minutes and what it was like.
6. Pg. 144 - How do you think dwelling on what we *should* have done negatively impacts our lives?
 - It defeats us. Makes us think we blew our one chance for happiness. And it forgets the fact that God can redeem us.
7. Top of pg. 145 - Why would option charts help with regret?
 - Because they help us realize we can't go back and change – and then help us focus our attention on what we *can* do.

Day Two: The Present

1. Pg. 147 - In this passage in Lamentations, Jeremiah begins to feel hopeful when he remembers the lovingkindness of the Lord. Why would remembering how kind and loving God is lift your depression?
2. How can we get ourselves to remember His lovingkindness when we're miserable and depressed? Can you think of any ways?
 - Pray with thanksgiving, listen to praise music, start a thanksgiving journal, read the Psalms.
3. Pg. 147 – Depending on how close your group is, you could ask this question: What circumstances tend to make you depressed? (134)

4. Pg. 148 - Read Lamentations 3:25. Who is the Lord good to?
 - It's good to remember this. He's good to those who wait for Him and seek Him – not to those who are focused on making their lives great so they can be happy.
5. What does waiting for God and seeking Him look like in real life?
 - Spending time with Him. Abiding in the Word. Making a real effort to see life from His perspective. Being willing to accept things that may seem unacceptable (think of Jesus on the cross and all the people in Hebrews 11). Working on giving up our idols and sin – not in our own strength, but with spiritual weapons.
6. On page 148, Barb says, “While life may seem very bleak for now, it will not always be this way. What does Psalm 30:5 say?”
7. Pg. 148 - Ask if anyone wrote anything down for the next question: Can you think of another time in your life . . .
8. Note on the questions at the bottom of pg. 148: Remember when you're talking about depression that there could be a physical reason for it. Don't encourage anyone to go off their medication (I didn't really think you would, but thought I should say it just in case!), and encourage them to go to a counselor if they need help.

Day Three: The Future

You could either go through the questions or sum up the chapter with these questions, depending on the time you have:

1. Why might we get depressed when we think about the future? (Because we want the good life and sometimes things happen that make us think the future won't give us the good life.)
2. If life is about loving God, is the future ever bleak? Why or why not? (No, because no matter what happens, we can love Him here, and we look forward to an eternity with Him.)
3. If life is about having fun, avoiding suffering, getting a lot accomplished, or watching the ones we love lead wonderful and fulfilling lives, is the future ever bleak? (yes)
4. So what's the solution to worry? (Make life about God!)

Could go over the dos and don'ts list.

Day Four: Loneliness

1. Do you agree with Mother Teresa that we're lonely? Why or why not?
2. Depending on how close your group is, you could ask the question near the bottom of page 153: Is there anything I you haven't accepted yet? If so, how is it contributing to your loneliness and discontent?
3. What are some practical things you can do to make life less lonely?

Day Five: Celebrations

1. Pg. 154 - What are we thinking that makes us believe it's a good thing to eat huge quantities of food on holidays and vacations? (Could write what people say on the

board and apply the truth to each lie or you could just go through the lies I have listed below.)

2. Let's take a look at each of these lies Barb lists for eating at celebrations.
 - a. I can't have fun . . .
 - How long does a normal party last?
 - How much of that time is spent actually putting food in your mouth – not just thinking of food or holding food, but chewing food. (This should be a small percentage of time at the party.)
 - If this is the case, do we have to learn to be happy without eating anyway at parties – even if we're not trying to lose weight?
 - Pg. 154 – Can you think of any other unpleasant consequences of eating too much? (Makes us feel bloated, depresses us, makes us tired, etc.)
 - b. It's not fair . . .
 - Pg. 155 - What would be some good things to base our eating decisions on? (Am I hungry? Does this fit within my boundaries?)
 - Pg. 155 - What would be some bad things to base our eating decisions on? (What do I feel like doing? What's available? What would be fun in the moment? What is my flesh crying out for?)
 - c. I shouldn't have to suffer . . .
 - Pg. 155 - How will you suffer if you break your boundaries? (gain weight, feel discouraged, be derailed on the eating plan, have to go through all the work of establishing boundaries again, feel crummy physically, etc.)
 - Pg. 155 – How will you suffer if you follow your boundaries? (You won't get to eat that fun treat. You may feel awkward if everyone else is eating.)
 - Pg. 155 – What decision will cause the most suffering?
 - d. It would cramp my style . . .
 - Does our style need to be cramped if we want to lose weight and keep it off?
 - Pg. 156 - Can you think of any good reason why you shouldn't have boundaries in the area of food when you have them in other areas of your life?
 - Can you live successfully and happily without boundaries in eating? Why or why not?
 - e. It's too hard to follow the rules . . .
 - Can you think of any ways to reduce temptation at holidays? (Have the women brainstorm a list.)

That's it! I hope this study guide has been helpful and I hope your class has helped the women and brought you closer together. If you get a chance to drop me a line, I would love to hear how the class went. You can email me through my blog (under the About section). Also, if there is any way I can make this leader's guide more helpful (or if you found any questions that didn't match up with page numbers, etc.), please let me know. I'm so glad you took the time to do this study. May God continue to bless you as you share His love with others! In Christ, Barb