

RESOURCES

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Central Territory

Type of Program: Everybody's Birthday

Theme: 50's Theme Party

Table Centerpieces: Place 78 rpm records and cardboard convertible cars in the center of table.

Games:

1. Hula-hoop contest.
2. Pin socks and clothes to a line with one hand.
3. Limbo dance.
4. Invite a disc-jockey to play the oldie songs and ask the women to name them.

Take Home Favor: Give a pair of white socks to the women to take home.

Menu: Coca cola, shakes, hamburger and fries.

Type of Program:
Baby Shower for the Corps Nursery
Theme: Two x Two



Party Ideas: Ask the women to bring gift items for the corps nursery.

Games:

1. Guess the number of M&Ms in a baby bottle.
2. Place various baby items on a table and ask the women to match the items that are used together such as diaper and wipes, socks and shoes, bottle and formula. Each item should have only one correct match. If they end up with "extra" items they must readjust their decisions.
3. Ask everyone to bring their favorite children's book and share why they like it. The book will then be given to the nursery.

Menu: Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, Mac and cheese, cheese and crackers, chips and salsa, apples and caramel,

Type:
Birthday Party

Theme: Nursery

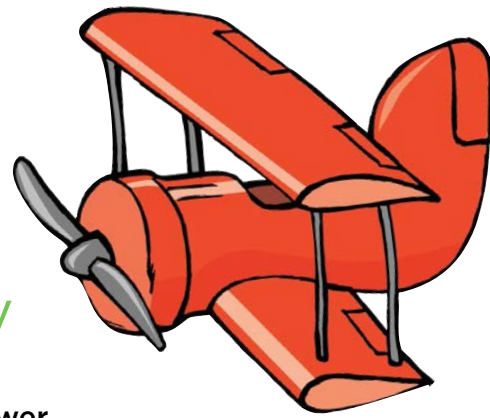
Rhyme Stories
Party Ideas: Ask the women to come as a character from a nursery rhyme.

Games:

1. Play charades using nursery rhyme charades.
2. Divide the women into groups to prepare and perform skits based on a nursery rhyme.



Eastern Territory



Major Joan Brewer

Type: Baby Shower

Theme: In Flight (Airplane)

Party Ideas: Set up room to

resemble a plane. Assign women to depict the pilot co-pilot and flight attendants. Print boarding passes with assigned plane seating assignments. The flight attendant shares the safety instructions and other game announcements.

Games:

1. Guests write a message for the mom on disposable diapers. For example: "I promise to pray for you and the baby,"
2. Does mom need a seat belt extender? Ask the women to cut a length of yarn that they think will go around the mom's waist.
3. In Flight Movie—put together a PowerPoint® presentation of the expectant mom as a child or show childhood photos of individuals attending the shower.
4. How well do you know the mom to be? Ask questions worded to relate to plane travel—"How old was mom when she first flew? Does mom save airline miles? Does mom like to fly?"

Menu: Serve snack items typically provided on an airplane.

Southern Territory



Major Debra Broome

Type: Baby Shower

Theme: Buzzing BaBee

Party Ideas: Decorate using a yellow and black color theme. Use honey, bee and hives for the centerpieces.

Games:

1. Baby Gift Bingo—make bingo card using potential gift items. The guests mark off these items from their cards as the mom opens each gift that is the same as on their card.
2. Busy as a Bee—divide the guests into teams. Each team member must fold a baby shirt, diaper a doll, clip four food coupons and scramble two eggs.
3. What Will I the Baby Be—guest must guess the date the baby will be born, its weight and length.

Menu: Cupcakes with yellow frosting and bees. Serve chicken fingers with honey-mustard sauce, lemon bars, Bit-O-Honey® candy and lemonade.



Type: Bridal Shower
Theme: 1950 Happy Housewife

Party Ideas: For table favors use wooden spoons or other small inexpensive utensils tied with ribbon. Decorate using retro items (old fashioned cola bottles, signs). Attach old 50s photos with wooden clothespins to a clothesline.

Games:

1. Plant a Kiss on Elvis—similar to pin the tail on the donkey.
2. The Price Is Right—guess the price of household items from the 50s.
3. Read “The Good Wife Guide” from the Good Housekeeping magazine that was printed in 1955. Check the Internet for a number of sites on this article.
4. Purchase a retro looking recipe box and ask each guest to bring a recipe to share with the bride.

Menu: Check the Internet for recipes from the 1950s.



Western Territory

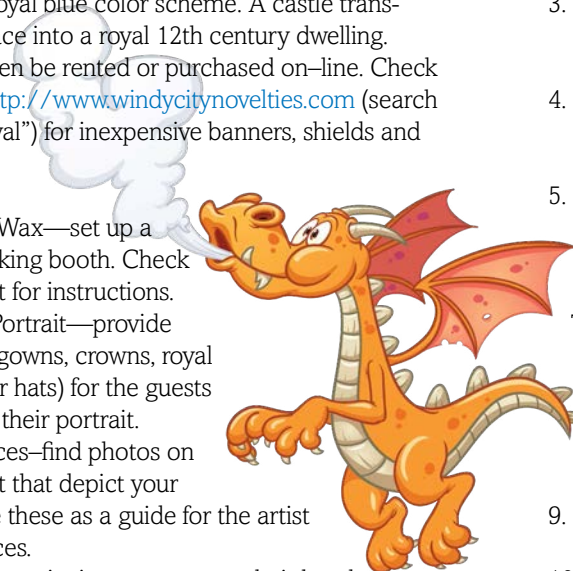
Stacie Brown

Type: Family Night
Theme: Hear Ye! Hear Ye!
Noble Nights and Fair Ladies

Party Ideas: Step back in history to the era of knights, dragons, princesses and kings and invite those attending to dress appropriately. Decorate using a stone gray, rich red and royal blue color scheme. A castle transforms any space into a royal 12th century dwelling. These can often be rented or purchased on-line. Check the website <http://www.windycitynovelties.com> (search using “medieval”) for inexpensive banners, shields and swords.

Activities:

1. Wicks and Wax—set up a candle-making booth. Check the Internet for instructions.
2. Ye Royale Portrait—provide costumes (gowns, crowns, royal robes, jester hats) for the guests to wear for their portrait.
3. Fanciful Faces—find photos on the Internet that depict your theme. Use these as a guide for the artist painting faces.
4. Archers Alley—invite guests to try their hand at this age-old skill using a suction toy archery set and a bulls-eye.
5. Ladies Headdress—covered wire, ribbons silk flowers and feathers can be used to create a head wreath.
6. Coat of Arms—invite the guest to create their own coat of arms. Provide a shield template, paints or colored pencils. Give them a list of some commonly used medieval symbols and their meanings. Check



the Internet for ideas.

One site is: <http://www.oshel.com/symbols.htm>.

7. Castle Building Contest—invite the guests to build a castle using marshmallows in various sizes and toothpicks for construction. Offer prizes for most creative, tallest, most beautiful.

Menu: Serve items that can be eaten using just your fingers—chicken, ribs, quiche, meat pies, chicken wings and fruit tarts.

Type: Family Night
Theme: Hawaiian Luau Party

Party Ideas: Turn your meeting room into a Hawaiian garden. Decorate using paper lanterns, brightly colored tablecloths, fishnets, shells, Tiki torches, a Tiki hut, fresh Hawaiian flowers and paper palm trees. Create a beach using sand designed for use in sandboxes. If meeting outside, place large sheets of plastic on the ground and dump the sand on top of it. This makes the clean-up easier. If you are meeting inside, fill children’s wading pools with the sand. Add buckets and shovels for making sand castles. As the guests arrive greet each with a silk lei, a grass shirt or a grass hat. Play Hawaiian music in the background.

Activities:

1. Gecko Hunt (lizard found in Hawaii) Hide plastic lizards around the garden/room.
2. Hula Hoop “Til You Drop—a contest to see who can go the longest or twirl the most hoops.
3. Pass the Coconut—played like “hot potato” but using a coconut. When the music stops, whoever is holding the coconut is out.
4. Pineapple Bowling—set up ten pineapples as the pins. Use a coconut as the bowling ball. Fun, but be prepared for a messy game.
5. Hawaiian Limbo—how low can the guest go under the limbo stick?
6. Hula Skirt Relay—each team must put on a hula outfit including a grass skirt, coconut top lei and straw hat.
7. Shell Hunt—hide shells in a filled sandbox.
8. Sand Castle Contest—build a sandcastle and give prizes in several categories.
8. Dolphin Toss—using a hula-hoop as the ring the contests must see if they can get an inflatable dolphin to jump through the ring by tossing it from a distance.
9. Hawaiian Lei—using fresh or silk flowers invite guests to string flower leis.
10. Beach Bingo—make bingo cards using luau theme words.
11. Guess the Number of Shells—take a beach-theme container such as a sand bucket or tote and fill with shells. Participants must guess the number of shells in the container.

Menu: Teriyaki chicken skewers, sumi salad, pineapple fried rice, ham and pineapple cream cheese wraps, fresh fruit and pineapple upside-down cake. Check the Internet for recipes.



PARTY THEME IDEAS

Western Territory

“RISE UP AND SHINE!” REMEMBER, RENEW, REBUILD

BY MAJOR MICHELE LESCANO

This retreat was sponsored by the Sierra Del Mar Division and held at their camp, but a number of corps could join together to offer a similar program for the women in their community. It might be held in a hotel or other venue. The focus group is made up of widows of any age, regardless of the length of their widowhood. They could also invite a friend to attend with them.

Suggested Schedule

Friday Program: Remembering

6:30—7:30 pm

Remember: Guest speaker shares her testimony as a widow.

7:30—8:00 pm

Time of Remembrance

At check-in invite each widow to write her husband's name on a slip of paper and place it in a jar. As the women enter the room for the evening program, they are given a stone and a paint pen to write anything regarding their husband, marriage or a memory from their time together. As music plays softly, the names are read aloud and the widow comes forward and places the stone around the bottom of the tree. Women are often afraid to say their husbands' names aloud; it's nice to hear them again.

8:15—9:00 pm

Mashed Potato Bar Mixer: Mashed potatoes are put in small glasses or plastic stemware. The toppings are served buffet style.

9:00—10:00 pm

Late Night Activities

Quiet remembrance: Around the campfire let each woman share her personal story of becoming a widow.

Remembering with music: Have a pianist take special requests of songs that remind the women of their loved one.

Fellowship Fun: Open Microphone with questions like: What's the weirdest comment people said to you after your husband died? "What book would you write of things not to say to a widow? This allows the women to laugh in a safe setting at the silly things people often say.

Saturday Program: Renew

7:00 am—8:00 am

Prayer Hike

8:00 am—9:00 am

Breakfast

9:30 am—10:30 am

General Session—Speaker frames her talk around renewal in Jesus featuring 2 Corinthians 5:17–21

10:45 am—11:45 am

Roundtable Discussions: Break-out sessions in groupings that fit the women's varied experiences

- Long term illness
- Suddenly widowed
- Widowed by suicide
- Long term widowed
- Reconnecting and remarriage

12:00 pm—1:00 pm **Lunch**

1:30 pm—2:30 pm

Workshops

- Life Journaling: How to record your thoughts, dreams, and progress.
- Asking the Hard Questions: Have a panel field God-questions that widows long to ask.
- Finances: Making sense of all those numbers. Learning checkbooks and budgeting.
- Computers 101: Guide to the basics of using computers.
- Creating a New Normal: Finding your footing with what you now have or don't have.
- How do I help you, my friend? (If you allow the widows to bring a friend along, this class provides the do's and don'ts of a good friend.
- Wise Widowed Parents: Offering helpful hints on single parenting.
- Fragile, Handle With Care: Health issues and how to take care of yourself.
- Life is all about how you handle plan B: Hints on adjusting to new circumstances.
- Creating a new space for you: Decorating hints for finding a place made just for you.
- Good Grief: Walking widows through the many stages of grief

2:30 pm—5:30 pm

Me Time Activities

These activities will depend on where the retreat is held and what activities are available.

6:00 pm—7:00 pm Dinner

7:15 pm—8:15 pm

General Session—"Renew" (Light-hearted)

Skit—"You are Beautiful" Use funny props to illustrate Solomon's description of his beloved in Song of Songs 7. You can find a video by Vonda Skelton at <http://tiny.cc/apcehx> this. Also check the website

<http://tiny.cc/1rcehx> for further information.

Devotion: Based on Song of Songs 7:10: "God Sees Me as His Beloved."

8:45 pm—9:30 pm

Pajama Fashion Show: Invite the women to wear their pajamas and take fun photos of the sleeping beauties. Finish with a chocolate dessert bar.

Sunday Worship: Rebuild

7:00 am—9:30 am **Continental Breakfast Buffet**

8:00 am—9:00 am **Prayer Walk or Stretching Exercises**

9:00 – 10:00 am **Personal Guided Devotions:** Provide each woman with a small box containing items to guide them in a devotional period.

10:00 am—11:15 am **Rebuilding Worship Service**

11:45 am –12:45 pm **Lunch** Sandwich Bar

1:00 pm—2:00 pm **Departure**



TRAVELING DIVAS

BY CAPTAIN MARJORIE MILLER

Whether by visiting a mall, going to a nail salon, hiking, or visiting a museum, the purpose of this outreach group is to attract new women from the community to the corps.

The group meets once a month, usually on a Saturday and the outing lasts anywhere from 2 to 8 hours depending on the activity. The age of the women ranges from 14 to 99, depending on the physical activity involved. They do not need to be believers or members of the corps.

Prepare flyers advertising the events and distribute to mothers of the children who come to the corps for various activities. They can also be given to women who are social service clients. Check with local businesses to see if the flyers can be posted on their bulletin boards. Advertise in the local newspaper and contact radio stations regarding public service spots about the various activities.



COFFEE GALS

BY MAJOR LINDA MADSEN

This group of women meets on a Wednesday morning at a local coffee house. It's an unstructured time; women may come and go as their schedule permits. Most spend at least 45 minutes in fellowship with one another. The average age is about 55; some women are still working while others are enjoying an early retirement.

They discuss how their week is going, share prayer requests and answers to prayer. They learn about each other, things they might not learn in a more structured program. They're uplifted and encouraged by their time together and always end with a word of prayer. A strong sense of caring develops within the group. If someone doesn't make the meeting that day, she can expect a phone call or visit to let her know she was missed. An unthreatening yet engaging environment draws new women to visit the group initially. Once familiar with some of the women in the group they're more comfortable in accepting an invitation to attend other church related events.

While the success of this group can be attributed to its unstructured format, there are things that could be implemented from time to time to add a little flavor through guided conversation. Suggested options might include:

Gab Bag—Place non-threatening questions on slips of paper and place in a small gift bag. Invite the women to draw a slip of paper and share the topic or question with the group. They can answer the question or start a conversation based on the topic. Keep questions non-threatening and fairly generic in nature.

Thanks a Latte—Place several scripture cards from promise boxes in a Latte mug and have each person take and read one. Invite them share how this promise speaks to them. It can be a very creative testimony time.

Percolating Projects—During their conversations, they may find themselves discussing a need at the corps such as the cleaning out of storage areas, redecorating the nursery, reorganizing the program supply room or helping with a breakfast for the youth on Sunday mornings. One such conversation led to sponsoring the purchase of food items for the youth Praise Breakfast every Sunday. This can be a great time of brainstorming and creative problem solving by women who want to make a difference without a lot of fuss.

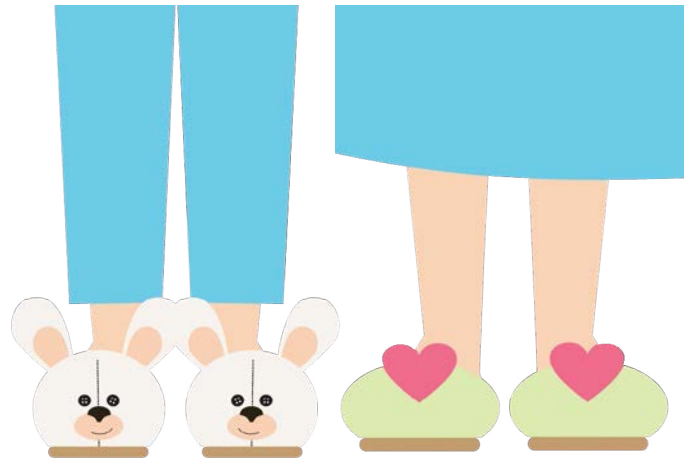
Southern Territory



ZAREPHATH WIDOWS' SUPPORT GROUP

This group was started by a retired officer, Major Fran Taylor, who lost her husband unexpectedly a few years ago and felt the need to reach out to other widows in her corps who were facing some of the same issues she had faced upon becoming single again. She invited these women to lunch and then they started meeting on a regular basis to share, pray and support one another. Fran shared with them about the widows of the Bible, especially the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:7–16) who in spite of thinking she had nothing left to offer acted in faith. When Elijah came asking for water and bread she did as Elijah requested. As a result, not only were her needs supplied but also she had enough to share. The message is we don't have to be afraid of the future now that your husband is gone because God will meet all our needs if you trust Him.

Eight women now attend this group. They meet once a month for lunch and also stay in contact by mail, phone, email and extra visits during the month when someone is going through a difficult time. The group keeps a prayer journal. They list their prayer requests, answers to prayer for one another and others outside of the group and include praise reports.



PAJAMA RAMA

Hold a big girls' pajama party. This is not an overnight event but is held from 6:00—8:00 p.m. Different stations are set up so that the women can participate in fun activities such as manicures, crafts, disco dancing and refreshments. A devotional time and invitation to participate in women's ministries programming follows at the end. This particular event took place at the Atlanta Kroc Center and was a great success.



DIAPER BAGS OF HOPE

This outreach program is directed to teen moms. It provides life skills training as well as diapers, wipes, clothing and toys for teen moms who are in need. The women's ministries group at the corps coordinated with several local high schools to hold a diaper drive. It was promoted locally through social media as well as the newspaper. They also sponsored a prom for the teenage moms called "One Night With the King." Local groups were invited to contribute towards life skill classes, gift bags, dresses, food, keepsake photos, and flowers.

Eastern Territory

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL

BY MAJOR INGER FURMAN

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

This outreach idea could be a one-day retreat held at camp, a local spa, the corps or a hotel. Ask the women to invite a friend, family member or neighbor to attend. It could also be open to the mothers of young people involved in corps activities. The aim is for women to understand that their identity, purpose and value in life come from God, not the circumstances or people around them and that they are worthy of special treatment because they are valuable to their Creator. In between each session arrange for the women to enjoy a time of pampering where they can relax and enjoy manicures, pedicures, facials and massages.

Session One—Mirror, Mirror

Read Psalm 139:13–16

Give each woman a small mirror. Ask them to look into it, not just glance, but to look into their own eyes (the window to the soul) and be honest with themselves about what they see. Who is in the mirror? What does it tell about you? What does it say about your identity, purpose and value? How much are you worth? Why? What is it that determines your worth? If I had to place a value on myself I would probably begin with my value as a wife, mother and officer.

You work hard to take care of others and if your value were to be measured by your fatigue many of you would say that you could retire tomorrow. But your identity and value are not found in who you are as a wife, mother or even as a valued employee. We are not defined by these roles, nor does that prove our value. Does it provide value? Yes! Is it worthwhile? Absolutely! But it is not the foundation of identity and value. Women today suffer from not knowing their true value or from understanding where that value comes from.

What determines your value?

- Who your parents are? (I'm not royalty)
- Where you come from? (Perhaps you come from the "wrong" side of the tracks.)
- How much money you have?
- Who your friends are?
- What you look like or what you wear? (That's what a lot of people think.)
- What mistakes you have made in the past? (No!)

We are busy women, caring for others, trying to accomplish it all, have it all, and be the best we can be. We try to please everyone else in the process. These are piecrust promises—easily made and easily broken. We live in a messy world that strives and strives, but doesn't understand the foundation behind the striving. We live in a world where women get lost as faces in the crowd because they feel inferior to what the world is telling them they should be. We cannot be strong women, we cannot accomplish it all, if we do not realize and know the foundation of who we are, and in whom we find our identity, value and worth.

Think On This

Stop and question what influences you are letting identify you and your value. Spend a short time at the beginning of the next session for those who are willing to share their insights.

Session Two—What's in a Name?

Who am I? How do I begin to understand my identity? What will help me to be who I think I am or want to be?

We are constantly chasing after the next best thing. We think that these will help us to feel better about ourselves or improve us: weight loss programs, wrinkle creams, self-help books and more money. But why are we doing this? Who will benefit? We don't slow down long enough to realize that none of these things will satisfy us because that's not what determines our value, our identity and our purpose. This is the "Not Enough Syndrome." We are looking to be more, be better, to try harder and be enough to be okay.

*"As long as we are trying to be enough, we will chronically be about self and not about God. We will do whatever we need to do to protect self instead of dying to self in favor of living for God." (Debbie Alsdorf, *The Faith Dare*).

Read 2 Corinthians 3:4–6, 12, 17–18. The truth is we haven't found our identity because we haven't acknowledged who we belong to. Our value, our purpose, our identity comes from the truth that we are children of God. We belong to Him. We have listened to a culture of mixed messages far too long. The truth can be found in Romans 8:16, 17, "The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in His sufferings in order that we may also share in His glory."



We belong to Him. When we begin to grasp the vastness of that truth, we can allow the Holy Spirit to transform our minds and hearts so that we live with purpose, identity and value. We read in Romans 12:2, “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will.” We must have our minds transformed.

What Do You Think?

Divide the women into groups of four or five. Ask them to discuss the following: **“Our mind is the control center of our life. What we think eventually becomes a belief, and we live by what we really believe, not by what we say we believe.”* (Debbie Alsdorf)

Homework: Refuse any negative thoughts or negative self-talk for the next 24 hours.

Session Three—Write It In The Sky

Many times when we try to discern what the Lord is saying to us, we fall short of understanding His message. That’s when we want to say, “Lord, could you just write it in the sky?” We may hear what is being said, but we wonder, “How do I do this? Lord, please tell me.” Listen to what God tell us in Romans 12:1, 2 from *The Message*. (Read this portion of Scripture.) We need to pour God’s love into our minds so it can make its way into our hearts. God wants to make us completely and wholly His.

Pass out saltine crackers and ask the women to eat them. Do not give them anything to drink but keep speaking.

What if I could always recognize the attack of the enemy? What if I could identify where he is working to steal, kill and destroy. Would we be able to “put on the armor of God” (Eph. 6: 10–18)? Would we be able to immediately go to our “tower of refuge and strength” (Jer. 16:19)? Would we be able to stand firm and trust Him who wants to give us abundant life? If we were constantly aware and able to recognize who is working for our good and who is actually the thief, could this spur us to live differently?

A chorus we sing says, “Come Holy Spirit and abide with me, my heart is longing to confide in Thee ...” Ask the women about the crackers they have eaten. Are they longing for a

drink of water? For what are you longing? God wants us to long for Him, just as we long for water when we are thirsty. We need to long for God to transform our will as He changes us into all He has planned for us. We are women in process—subject to one irritating thing after another so that God can create His glory and beauty within us. No one said this was easy. It takes five years for one irritating grain of sand to become a pearl inside an oyster. **“It’s time to believe that the shame that has covered us or the insecurity that has surrounded us can be changed by looking to Christ.”* (Debbie Alsdorf) God has created you and, “The King is enthralled by your beauty” (Ps. 45:11).

Don’t let the enemy rob you. When it gets tough, who will you cling to? Just as it is a reflex for a baby to grasp your finger when placed near him, you will be looking for something to cling to when going through challenges. When you feel down, when you are looking for security, where will you turn? Electrical power is invisible, but we miss it when it’s gone. Our power comes from God. His power is within each of us, but do we tap into it or do we take it for granted? Too often we choose to live with our own inferior power. When we are connected to Him, a very real anointing gives us power, and wonderful things happen. We fret, we worry, we try to accomplish it all; but when He is the source of power, we can relax.

We long for significance, appreciation, acceptance and love. We look for it in our work, our home, in our families and friends—anywhere we can find it. If we don’t know who we are and why we are here, we will remain forever lost trying to find significance. Build a solid foundation in the Word of God. So when the thief tries to rob you of your true identity, you can remain firmly planted on this foundation, in this truth.





Read 2 Corinthians 5:16, 17 from The Message.

We are not looking at things the way God sees them. We look at ourselves in our distorted mirrors and see our mistakes. God looks and see His purpose and the miracle of Himself in us. This is always through the filter of the blood of Jesus, “the perfected,” “the new,” “the original holy intent.” When we take our lives for granted, we rarely live on purpose. We just get by or keep trying to make ourselves significant. Many Christians live this way, often comparing ourselves to others.

Homework: This next week dare to live the miracle that you are.

Session Four—Safe and Secure

Who are you? Why are you here? Where are you going? These are the questions of identity, value and purpose. We can believe the lies the culture gives to answer these questions, or we can believe the truth that God has set forth in His Word. The fact is that the rich, full life that Christ has for us is more secure than the flimsy appearance model that spells worth in our culture.

*“What if we believed it is Christ who completes us, or that we actually are complete because of Christ in us, and in His work for us? Could it be that this kind of love is the very thing that makes us balanced, centered, secure and yes ... complete?” (Debbie Alsdorf) If we believe we are complete in Christ, we can stop our search for something more and can begin living life.

What if a change took place at the most fundamental level in you, the places you cannot see, when His Spirit came to make a home in you? What if Christ, making Himself real in you, completed you to the point of being valuable for

His work as an ordinary woman made extraordinary by His presence and power? We put so much value on the external—what we wear, what we have, what we do, what we accomplish. This is shallow value. God seals us; He created us, planned for us, ordained our days. Someone who has put this much thought into us must truly love us, must truly want us.

“Listen to me, O house of Jacob ... you whom I have upheld since you were conceived, and have carried since your birth. Even to your old age and gray hairs I am He, I am He who will sustain you. I have made you and I will carry you” (Isaiah 46:3, 4). What an incredible promise from God to us.

You are God’s daughter; loved, cherished and kept by Him. God has created you for His purposes, to love Him and to love others. God determines your days and the places you will live. He is accomplishing all things in your life so that it will conform completely to His will. We belong. This is where we find our identity, purpose and our value.

The first phrase in the choral song “In Christ Alone” states, “In Christ alone my hope is found, He is my strength, my song.” Dare to believe that you are complete in God. The song continues, “Bold I approach the eternal throne, and claim the crown through Christ my own. Here in the power of Christ I stand.” Believe it, claim it, live your life with identity, purpose and value that is found in Him.

*Notes taken from Debbie Alsdorf (2010) *The Faith Dare*. Revell Publishing: Grand Rapids.